

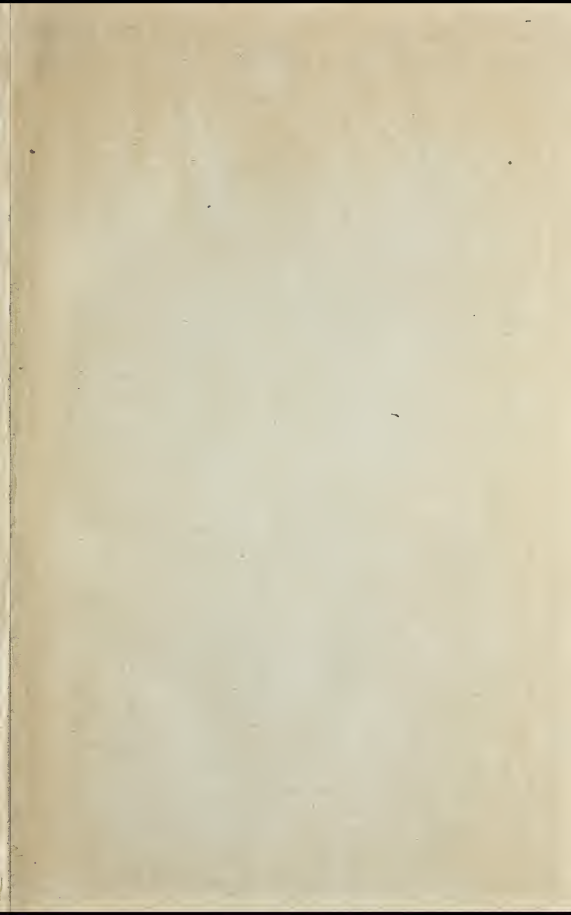
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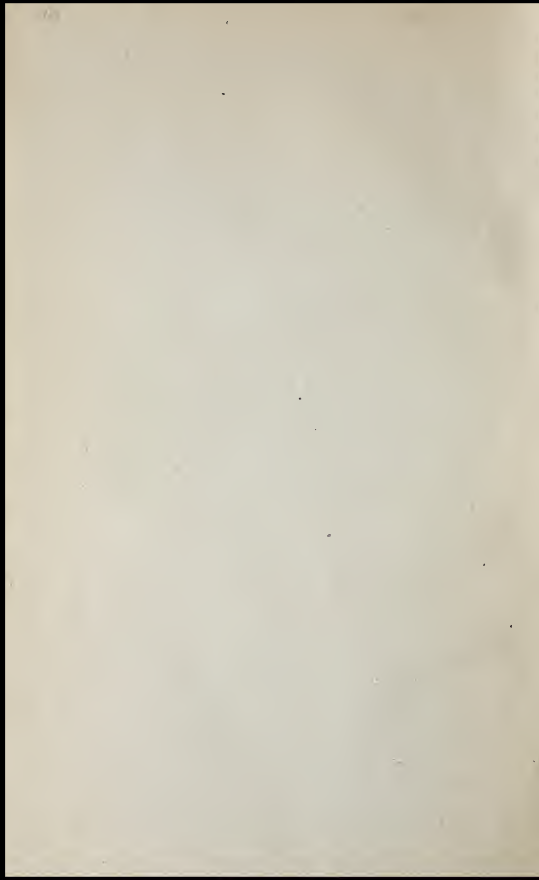
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JOURNAL OF A TRAPPER

OR

NINE YEARS IN THE : 1834-1843
ROCKY MOUNTAINS



Being a General Description of the Country,
Climate, Rivers, Lakes, Mountains,
Etc., and a View of the Life
Led by a Hunter in
those Regions



By OSBORNE RUSSELL

"I envy no man that knows more than
myself and pity them that know less."

—Sir T. Brown

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PREFACE

Reader, if you are in search of the travels of a classical and scientific tourist, please to lay this volume down, and pass on, for this simply informs you what a trapper has seen and experienced. But if you wish to peruse a hunter's rambles among the wild regions of the Rocky Mountains, please to read this, and forgive the author's foibles and imperfections, considering as you pass along that he has been chiefly educated in Nature's school under that rigid tutor Experience, and you will also bear in mind the author does not hold himself responsible for the correctness of statements made otherwise than from observation.

THE AUTHOR.

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From the Original Manuscript



Journal of a Trapper

CHAPTER I.

Expedition Left Independence, Mo., April 28, 1834, Headed by Nathaniel J. Wyeth.

At the town of Independence, Mo., on the 4th of April, 1834, I joined an expedition fitted out for the Rocky Mountains and mouth of the Columbia river, by a company formed in Boston under the name and style of the Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company. The same firm had fitted out a brig of two hundred tons burden, freighted with the necessary assortment of merchandise for the salmon and fur trade, with orders to sail to the mouth of the Columbia river, whilst the land party, under the direction of Mr. Nathaniel J. Wyeth, should proceed across the Rocky Mountains and unite with the brig's company in establishing a post on the Columbia near the Pacific.

Our party consisted of forty men engaged in the service, accompanied by Messrs. Nutall and Townsend, botanists and ornithologists, with two attendants; likewise Revs. Jason and Daniel Lee, Methodist missionaries, with four attendants, on their way to establish a mission in Oregon, which brought our numbers (including six independent trappers) to fifty-eight men. From the 23d to the 27th of April we were engaged in arranging our packs and moving to a place about four miles from Independence. On the morning of the 28th we were all equipped and mounted hunter-like. About forty men leading two loaded horses each were marched out in double file with joyous hearts, enlivened by anticipated prospects, led by Mr. Wyeth, a persevering adventurer and lover of enterprise, whilst the remainder of the party, with twenty head of extra horses and as many cattle to supply emergencies, brought up the rear under the direction of Captain Joseph Thing, an eminent navigator and fearless son of Neptune, who had been employed by the company in Boston to accompany the party and measure the route across the Rocky Mountains by astronomical observation.

We traveled slowly through the beautiful, verdant and widely extended prairie until about 2 o'clock p. m. and encamped at a small grove of timber near a spring. On the 29th we took up our march and traveled across a large and beautifully undulating prairie, intersected by small streams skirted with timber intermingled with shrubbery, until the 3d day of May, when we arrived at the Kaw or Kansas river, near the residence of the U. S. Agent for those Indians.

The Kaw or Kansas Indians are the most filthy, indolent

and degraded set of human beings I ever saw. They live in small, oval huts four or five feet high, formed of willow branches and covered with deer, elk or buffalo skins.

On the 4th of May we crossed the river and on the 5th resumed our march into the interior, travelling over beautiful rolling prairies and encamping on small streams at night until the 10th, when we arrived at the river Platte. We followed up this river to the forks, then forded the south fork and traveled up the north until the 1st day of June, when we arrived at Laramie's fork of the Platte, where is the first perceptible commencement of the Rocky Mountains. We crossed this fork and traveled up the main river until night and encamped. The next day we left the river and traveled across Black Hills nearly parallel with the general course of the Platte until the 9th of June, when we came to the river again and crossed it at a place called the Red Buttes (high mountains of red rock from which the river issues). The next day we left the river on our left hand and traveled a northwest direction, and stopped at night on a small spring branch, nearly destitute of wood or shrubbery. The next day we arrived at a stream running into the Platte, called Sweetwater. This we ascended to a rocky, mountainous country until the 15th of June, then left it and crossed the divide between the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and encamped on Sandy Creek, a branch running into Green River, which flows into the Colorado of the West. The next day we moved down Sandy west northwest direction and arrived at Green River on the 18th of June. Here we found some white hunters, who informed us that the grand rendezvous of the whites and Indians would be on a small western branch of the river about 20 miles distant, in a southwest direction. Next day, June 20th, we arrived at the destined place. Here we met with two companies of trappers and traders. One was a branch of the American Fur Company, under the direction of Messrs. Dripps and Fontanelli; the other was called the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. The names of the partners were Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublett and James Bridger. The two companies consisted of about six hundred men, including men engaged in the service, white, halfbreed and Indian fur trappers. This stream was called Ham's Fork of Green River. The face of the adjacent country was very mountainous and broken, except the small alluvial bottoms along the streams. It abounded with buffalo, antelope, elk and bear and some few deer along the river. Here Mr. Wyeth disposed of a part of his loads to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and on the 2d of July we renewed our march towards the Columbia river. After leaving Ham's Fork we took across a high range of hills in a northwest direction and fell on to a stream called Bear River, which emptied into the Big Salt Lake. This was a beautiful country. The river which was about 20 yards wide, ran through large, fertile bottoms bordered by rolling ridges which gradually ascended on each side of the river to the high ranges

of dark and lofty mountains upon whose tops the snow remained nearly the year round. We traveled down this river northwest about 15 miles and encamped opposite a lake of fresh water about 60 miles in circumference, which outlet into the river on the west side. Along the west border of this lake the country was generally smooth, ascending gradually into the interior and terminating in a high range of mountains which nearly surrounded the lake, approaching close to the shore on the east. The next day, the 7th, we traveled down the river and on the 9th encamped at a place called the Sheep Rock, so called from a point of the mountain terminating at the river bank in a perpendicular high rock. The river curved around the foot of this rock and formed a half circle, which brought its course to the southwest, from whence it ran in the same direction to the Salt Lake, about 80 miles distant. The sheep occupied this prominent elevation (which overlooked the surrounding country to a great extent) at all seasons of the year.

On the right hand or east side of the river about two miles above the rock were five or six mineral springs, some of which had precisely the taste of soda water when taken up and drank immediately; others had a sour, sulphurous taste; none of them had any outlet, but boiled and bubbled in small holes a few inches from the surface of the ground. This place which looked so lonely, visited only by the rambling trapper or solitary savage, will doubtless, at no distant day, be a resort for thousands of the gay and fashionable world, as well as invalids and spectators. The country immediately adjacent seemed to have all undergone volcanic action at some remote period, the evidences of which, however, still remained in the deep and frightful chasms which might be found in the rocks throughout this portion of the country and which could only have been formed by some terrible convulsion of nature. The ground about these springs was very strongly impregnated with salsoda. There were also large beds of clay in the vicinity, of a snowy whiteness, which was much used by the Indians for cleansing their clothes and skins, it not being inferior to any soap for cleansing woollens or skins, dressed after the Indian fashion.

CHAPTER II.

Meeting With Captain B. S. Bonneville and Party—Establishment of the Trading Post at Fort Hall.

On July 11th we left Bear River and crossed low ridges of broken country for about 15 miles in a northeast direction, and fell on to a stream which ran into Snake River, called Blackfoot. Here we met with Captain B. S. Bonneville and a party of 10 or 12 men. He was on his way to the Columbia and was employed killing and drying buffalo meat for the journey. The next day we traveled in a westerly direction over a rough, mountainous country about 25 miles, and the day following, after traveling about 20 miles in the same direction, we emerged from the mountains into the great valley of the Snake River. On the 16th we crossed the valley and reached the river in about 25 miles travel west. Here Mr. Wyeth concluded to stop, build a fort and deposit the remainder of his merchandise, leaving a few men to protect them, and trade with the Snake and Bannock Indians.

On the 18th we commenced the fort, which was a stockade 80 feet square, built of cottonwood trees set on end, sunk two and one-half feet in the ground and standing about 15 feet above, with two bastions eight feet square at the opposite angles. On the 4th of August the fort was completed and on the 5th the "Stars and Stripes" were unfurled to the breeze at sunrise in the center of a savage and uncivilized country, over an American trading post.

The next day Mr. Wyeth departed for the mouth of the Columbia River with all the party excepting twelve men (myself included) who were stationed at the fort. I now began to experience the difficulties attending a mountaineer, we being all raw hands, excepting the man who had charge of the fort, and a mulatto, the two latter having but very little experience in hunting game with the rifle, and although the country abounded with game, still it wanted experience to kill it.

On the 12th of August myself and three others (the mulatto included) started from the fort to hunt buffalo. We proceeded up the stream running into Snake River near the fort called Ross Fork in an easterly direction about 25 miles, crossed a low mountain in the same direction about five miles and fell on to a stream called the Portneuf. Here we found several large bands of buffalo. We went to a small spring and encamped. I now prepared myself for the first time in my life to kill meat for my supper, with a rifle. I had an elegant one, but had little experience in using it. However, I approached the band of buffaloes, crawling on my hands and knees within about 80 yards of them, then raised my body erect, took aim and shot at a bull. At the crack of the gun the buffaloes all ran off excepting the bull which I had wounded. I then reloaded and shot as fast as I could until I had driven 25 bullets at, in and about him, which was all

that I had in my bullet pouch, while the bull still stood, apparently riveted to the spot. I watched him anxiously for half an hour in hopes of seeing him fall, but to no purpose. I was obliged to give it up as a bad job and retreat to our encampment without meat; but the mulatto had better luck—he had killed a fat cow whilst shooting 15 bullets at the band. The next day we succeeded in killing another cow and two bulls. We butchered them, took the meat and returned to the fort.

Experience With a Grizzly Bear.

On the 20th of August we started again to hunt meat. We left the fort and traveled about six miles when we discovered a grizzly bear digging and eating roots in a piece of marshy ground near a large bunch of willows. The mulatto approached within 100 yards and shot him through the left shoulder. He gave a hideous growl and sprang into the thicket. The mulatto then said: "Let him go; he is a dangerous varmint," but not being acquainted with the nature of these animals I determined on making another trial, and persuaded the mulatto to assist me. We walked around the bunch of willows where the bear lay, keeping close together, with our rifles ready cocked and presented towards the bushes, until near the place where he had entered, when we heard a sullen growl about 10 feet from us, which was instantly followed by a spring of the bear toward us, his enormous jaws extended and eyes flashing fire. Oh Heavens! was ever anything so hideous? We could not retain sufficient presence of mind to shoot at him but took to our heels, separating as we ran, the bear taking after me. Finding I could outrun him, he left and turned to the other, who wheeled about and discharged his rifle, covering the bear with smoke and fire, the ball, however, missing him. He turned and bounded toward me. I could go no further without jumping into a large quagmire which hemmed me on three sides. I was obliged to turn about and face him. He came within about 10 paces of me, then suddenly stopped and raised his ponderous body erect, his mouth wide open, gazing at me with a beastly laugh. At this moment I pulled trigger as I knew not what else to do and hardly knew that I did this, but it accidentally happened that my rifle was pointed towards the bear when I pulled and the ball piercing his heart, he gave one bound from me, uttered a deathly howl and fell dead, but I trembled as if I had an ague fit for half an hour after. We butchered him, as he was very fat, packed the meat and skin on our horses and returned to the fort with the trophies of our bravery, but I secretly determined in my own mind never to molest another wounded grizzly bear in a marsh or thicket.

On the 26th of September, our stock of provisions beginning to get short, four men started again to hunt buffalo. As I had been out several times in succession I concluded to stay in the fort awhile and let others try it. This was the most lonely and dreary place I think I ever saw—not a human to

be seen excepting the men about the fort. The country was very smoky and the weather sultry and hot. On the first day of October our hunters arrived with news which caused some little excitement among us. They had discovered a village of Indians on Blackfoot creek, about 25 miles from the fort in a northeasterly direction, consisting of about 60 lodges. They had ridden, greenhorn-like, into the village without any ceremony or knowledge of the friendly or hostile disposition of the Indians, neither could they inform us to what nation they belonged. It happened, however, that they were Snake, friendly to the whites, and treated our men in a hospitable manner. After remaining all night with them three of the Indians accompanied our hunters to the fort. From these we gathered (through the mulatto who could speak a little of their language) much desired information. The next day myself and the mulatto started to the village, where we arrived about sun half an hour high. We were conducted to the chief's lodge where we dismounted and were cheerfully saluted by the chief, who was called by the whites "Iron Wristbands" and by the Indians "Pah-dasher-wah-un-dah" or the hiding bear. Our horses were taken to grass and we followed him into his lodge, when he soon ordered supper to be prepared for us. He seemed very much pleased when we told him the whites had built a trading post on Snake River. He said the village would go to the fort in three or four days to trade. We left them next morning loaded with as much fat, dried buffalo meat as our horses could carry, which had been given as a gratuity. We were accompanied on our return to the fort by six of the men. On the 10th the village arrived and pitched their lodges within about 200 yards of the fort. I now commenced learning the Snake language and progressed so far in a short time that I was able to understand most of their words employed in matters of trade.

October 20th a village of Bannocks, consisting of 250 lodges, arrived at the fort. From these we traded a considerable quantity of furs, a large supply of dried meat, deer, elk and sheep skins. In the meantime we were employed building small log houses and making other necessary preparations for the approaching winter.

CHAPTER III.

Snake Valley a Winter Resort for Trappers—Hunting Party Suffers from Hunger—One Member Lost.

November 5th some white hunters arrived at the fort who had been defeated by the Blackfoot Indians on Ham's Fork of Green River. One of them had his arm broken by a fusee ball, but by the salutary relief which he obtained from the fort he was soon enabled to return to his associates. On the 16th two more white men arrived and reported that Captain Bonneville had returned from the lower country and was passing within 30 miles of the fort on his way to Green River. On the 20th four white men arrived and reported that a party of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, consisting of 60 men under the direction of one of the partners (Mr. Bridger), were at the forks of Snake River, about 60 miles above the fort, where they intended to pass the winter. We were also informed that the two fur companies had formed a coalition. December 15th the ground was still bare but frozen and the weather very cold. On the 24th Captain Thing arrived from the mouth of the Columbia with 10 men, fetching supplies for the fort. Times now began to have a different appearance. The whites and Indians were very numerous in the valley. All came to pass the winter on Snake River. On the 20th of January 12 of Mr. Bridger's men left his camp and came to the fort to get employment. They immediately made an engagement with Captain Thing to form a party for hunting and trapping. On the 15th of March the party was fitted out, consisting of 10 trappers and seven camp keepers (myself being one of the latter), under the direction of Mr. Joseph Gale, a native of the City of Washington. March 25th we left the fort and traveled about six miles northeast and encamped on a stream running into the river about 12 miles below the fort, called Portneuf. The next day we followed up this stream in an easterly direction about 15 miles. Here we found the snow very deep. From this we took a south course in the direction of Bear River. Our animals being so poor and the traveling so bad, we had to make short marches, and reached Bear River on the 1st day of April. The place where we struck the river was called Cache Valley, so called from its having been formerly a place of deposit for the fur traders. The country on the north and west side of the river was somewhat broken, uneven and covered with wild sage. The snow had disappeared only upon the south sides of the hills. On the south and east sides of the river lay the valley, but it appeared very white and the river nearly overflowing its banks, insomuch that it was very difficult crossing, and should we have been able to have crossed the snow would have prevented us gaining the foot of the mountain on the east side of the valley. This place being entirely destitute of game, we had to live chiefly upon roots for ten days. On the 11th of April we swam the river with our horses and

baggage and pushed our way through the snow across the valley to the foot of the mountain. Here we found the ground bare and dry, but we had to stay another night without supper. About 4 o'clock the next day the meat of two fat grizzly bears was brought into camp. Our camp kettles had not been greased for some time, as we were continually boiling thistle roots in them during the day, but now four of them containing about three gallons each were soon filled with fat bear meat, cut in very small pieces and hung over a fire, which all hands were employed in keeping up with the utmost impatience. An old, experienced hand who stood six feet six and was never in a hurry about anything, was selected by a unanimous vote to say when the stew (as we called it) was done, but I thought, with my comrades, that it took a longer time to cook than any meal I ever saw prepared, and after repeated appeals to his long and hungry stewardship by all hands he at length consented that it might be seasoned with salt and pepper and dished out to cool. But it had not much time for cooling before we commenced operations, and all pronounced it the best meal they had ever eaten, as a matter of course where men had been starving.

The next morning I took a walk up a smooth spur of the mountain to look at the country. This valley commenced about 30 miles below the Soda Springs, the river running west of south entering the valley through a deep cut in the high hills. After winding its way through the north and west borders of the valley it turned due west and ran through a deep canyon of perpendicular rocks on its way to the Salt Lake. The valley laid in a sort of semi-circle or rather an oblong on the south and east of about 20 miles in length by five miles in diameter and nearly surrounded by high and rugged mountains from which flowed large numbers of small streams, crossing the valley and emptying into the river. There were large quantities of beaver and otter living in these streams, but the snow melting raised the water so high that our trappers made but slow progress in catching them.

We stopped in this valley until the 20th of April, then moved to the southeast extremity and made an attempt to cross the mountain. The next day we traveled up a stream called Rush Creek in an easterly direction, through a deep gorge in the mountain for about 12 miles, which then widened about a mile into a smooth and rolling country. Here we staid the following day. We then took a northeast course over the divide and traveled about 12 miles through snow two or three feet deep and in many places drifts to the depth of six or eight feet deep. At night we encamped on a small dry spot of ground on the south side of a steep mountain, where there was little or no vegetation excepting wild sage.

Some time after we had stopped it was disclosed that one man was missing—a young English shoemaker from

Bristol. We found he had been seen last dismounted and stopping to drink at a small branch at some distance before we entered snow. On the following morning I was ordered to go back in search of him. I started on the snow which was frozen hard enough to bear me and my horse. I went to the place where he was last seen and found his trail, which I followed on to a high mountain when I lost it among the rocks. I then built a large fire, shot my gun several times and after hunting till near sunset without hopes of finding him, I gave it up and went to the edge of the snow and stopped for the night. The next morning I started at daylight in a gallop on the snow, traversing mountain and valley smoothed up with snow so hard frozen that a galloping horse scarcely left a foot print. About noon I arrived on a high ridge which overlooked the Snake Lake and the valley southwest of it, which had apparently been clear of snow for some length of time. At the southern extremity of the lake lay the camp, about two miles distant northeast of me. I descended the mountain and entered the camp. On the 27th of April we traveled down the west side of the lake to the outlet of the Bear River. Here we found about 300 lodges of Snake Indians. We encamped at the village and staid three days. In the meantime our trappers were engaged hunting beaver in the river and small streams. We then crossed the river and ascended a branch called Thomas' Fork, in a northerly direction about 10 miles. The next day we started across the mountain in a northerly direction and after traveling about five miles we discovered a grizzly bear about 200 yards ahead of us. One of our hunters approached and shot him dead on the spot. We all rode up and dismounted to butcher him. He was an enormous animal, a hideous brute, a savage looking beast. On removing his skin we found the fat on his back measured six inches deep. He had probably not left his winter quarters more than two hours, as we saw his tracks on the snow where he had just left the thick forest of pines on the side of the mountain. We put the meat on our pack animals and traveled up the mountain about five miles and encamped. The next morning we started about two hours before day and crossed the mountain on the snow, which was frozen hard enough to bear our animals, and at 10 o'clock a. m. we found ourselves traveling down a beautiful green vale which led us to the valley on Salt River, where we encamped about 2 o'clock p. m.

This river derived its name from the numerous salt springs found on its branches. It ran through the middle of a smooth valley about 40 miles long and 10 wide, emptying its waters into Lewis' Fork of Snake River, its course being almost due north. This was a beautiful valley, covered with green grass and herbage, surrounded by towering mountains covered with snow, spotted with groves of tall spruce pines which, from their vast elevation, resembled small twigs half immersed in the snow, whilst thousands of buffaloes carelessly feeding in the green vales contributed to the wild and

romantic splendor of the surrounding scenery. On the 10th of May we moved down the river about 12 miles to a stream running into it on the west side, called Scott's Fork. Here were some fine salt springs, the salt forming on the pebbles by evaporation to the depth of five or six inches in a short time after the snow had disappeared. May 11th, after gathering a supply of salt, we traveled down the river about 15 miles and encamped near the mouth of a stream on the west side called Gardner's Fork. Here we met with Mr. Bridger and his party, who informed us that the country around and below was much infested with Blackfeet. They had had several skirmishes with them in which they had lost a number of horses and traps and one young man had been wounded in the shoulder by a ball from a fusée. Upon the receipt of this information our leader concluded to shape his course toward the fort. On the 14th of May we ascended Gardner's Fork about 15 miles through a deep gorge in the high, craggy mountain. May 15, traveled up this stream west about 10 miles, when the country opened into a valley ten miles long and two wide. Here we left Gardner's Fork, which turns almost due north into the high mountain, with the bend of it just cutting the north end of this valley. We traveled south about three miles and encamped on Blackfoot, which runs into Snake river, after a course of about 100 miles. Here the snow was very deep over nearly the whole plain, which was surrounded by high mountains. On the 16th we traveled down Blackfoot, which runs southwest across the valley, then turns west and runs into a deep cut in the mountain upwards of a thousand feet above the bed of the stream, the entrance of which seems barely wide enough to admit its waters. We traveled through this canyon for about 10 miles, when it opened into a large plain extending to the Sheep Rock on Bear river, which appeared to be about 40 miles distant to the southwest. There Blackfoot makes a sweeping curve to the southwest, then gradually turning to the north enters a narrow gorge of basaltic rock, through which it rushes with impetuosity for about 15 miles, then emerges into the great plain of the Snake river. 17th—We traveled down this stream about 15 miles and stopped to kill and dry buffalo meat sufficient to load our loose horses. On the 22d we moved down 10 miles, where we found thousands of buffalo bulls and killed a great number of them, the cows being very poor at this season of the year. May 30th we traveled down to the plains and on the day following arrived at the fort after traveling about 30 miles in a southwest direction. On arriving at the fort we learned Captain Thing had started in April with 12 men for the purpose of establishing a trading post on a branch of Salmon river, but had been defeated by the Blackfeet, with the total loss of his outfit excepting his men and horses.

CHAPTER IV.

**Description of a "Fall Hunt"—Abram Patterson Drowned—
Attacked by Indians, One Man Wounded.**

On the 10th of June a small party belonging to the Hudson Bay Company arrived from Fort Vancouver on the Columbia river, under the direction of Mr. F. Ermatinger, accompanied by Captain Wm. Stewart, an English half-pay officer who had passed the winter at Vancouver and was on a tour of pleasure in the Rocky Mountains. On the 12th they left Fort Hall and started for the grand rendezvous on Green river. We now began to make preparations for what the trappers termed the "Fall Hunt," and all being ready on the 15th, we started. Our party (under our former leader) consisted of 24 men, 14 trappers and 10 camp keepers. It was the intention of our leader to proceed to the Yellowstone lake and hunt the country which lay in the vicinity of our route; from thence proceed to the head waters of the Missouri and Snake rivers on our return back to Fort Hall, where it was intended we should arrive about the middle of October next. We traveled to the mouth of Blackfoot creek, about 10 miles. 16th—Up Blackfoot about 15 miles. 17th—Followed up this stream about 10 miles farther, then left it to our right and took a northeast course through the dry plains covered with wild sage and sand hills, about 15 miles, to the foot of the mountain and encamped at a small spring which sinks in the plain soon after leaving the mountain. Here we killed a couple of fine bulls and took some of the best meat. 18th—We crossed a low mountain in an easterly direction, about 12 miles, and encamped on a stream called Gray's creek, which empties into Snake river about 40 miles above Fort Hall. 19th—Traveled east over a rough, broken, mountainous country about 12 miles and encamped on a small branch of the same stream. This country afforded no timber excepting the quaking asp, which grows in small, scrubby groves in the nooks and ravines among the hills. 20th—We left the waters of Gray's creek and crossed a low place in the mountain in an easterly direction, fell on to a small stream running into Lewis' Fork—distance 10 miles. 21st—Traveled east, following this stream to the mouth, about 15 miles, which was about 30 miles below the mouth of Salt river. Here we were obliged to cross Lewis' Fork, which is about 300 yards wide and might be forded at a low stage of water, but at that time was almost overflowing its banks and running at the rate of about six miles per hour. We commenced making a boat by sewing two raw bull hides together, which we stretched over a frame formed of green willow branches, and then dried it gradually over a slow fire during the night. 22d—Our boat being completed, we commenced crossing our equipage, and while five of us were employed at this a young man by the name of Abram Patterson attempted to cross on horseback. In spite of all the advice and entreaty

of those present, his wild and rash temper got the better of his reason and after a desperate struggle to reach the opposite bank he abandoned his horse, made a few springs, and sank to rise no more. He was a native of Pennsylvania, about 23 years of age. We succeeded in crossing our baggage and encamped on the east side for the night. Lewis' Fork at this place was timbered with large cottonwood trees along the banks on both sides. On the east lay a valley about 28 miles long and three or four wide in an oblong shape, half enclosed by a range of towering mountains which approached the river at each extremity of the valley. 23d—We crossed the north point of the valley and ascended a small stream about 15 miles northeast, where we encamped among the mountains thickly covered with tall pines intermingled with fallen timber. 24th—Crossed the mountain, 12 miles easterly course, and descended into the southwest extremity of a valley called Pierre's Hole, where we staid the next day. This valley lies north and south in an oblong form, about 30 miles long and 10 wide, surrounded, except on the north, by wild and rugged mountains; the east range resembles mountains piled on mountains and capped with three spiral peaks which pierce the clouds. These peaks bear the French name of Tetons or Teats. The Snake Indians called them the hoary headed Fathers. This was a beautiful valley, consisting of a smooth plain intersected by small streams and thickly clothed with grass and herbage and abounding with buffalo, elk, deer, antelope, etc.

On the 27th we traveled to the north end of the valley and encamped on one of the numerous branches which unite at the northern extremity and forms a stream called Pierre's Fork which discharges its waters into Henry's Fork of Snake river. The stream on which we encamped flows directly from the central Teton and is narrowly skirted with Cottonwood trees, closely intermingled with underbrush, on both sides. We were encamped on the south side in a place partially clear of brush, under the shade of the large cottonwoods.

On the 28th about 9 o'clock a. m. we were aroused by an alarm of "Indians." We ran to our horses. All was confusion, each trying to catch his horses. We succeeded in driving them into camp where we caught all but six, which escaped into the prairies. In the meantime the Indians appeared before our camp to the number of 60, of which 15 or 20 were mounted on horseback and the remainder on foot, all being entirely naked, armed with fuses, bows, arrows, etc. They immediately caught the horses which had escaped from us and commenced riding to and fro within gunshot of our camp with all the speed their horses were capable of producing, without shooting a single gun, for about 20 minutes, brandishing their war weapons and yelling at the top of their voices. Some had scalps suspended on small poles which they waved in the air, others had pieces of scarlet cloth with one end fastened round their heads while the other trailed after them. After securing my horses I took my gun, exam-

lined the priming, set the breech on the ground and hand on the muzzle, with my arms folded, gazed at the novelty of this scene for some minutes, quite unconscious of danger, until the whistling of balls about my ears gave me to understand that these were something more than mere pictures of imagination and gave me assurance that these living creatures were a little more dangerous than those I had been accustomed to see portrayed on canvas.

The first gun was fired by one of our party, which was taken as the signal for attack on both sides, but the well directed fire from our rifles soon compelled them to retire from the front and take to the brush behind us, where they had the advantage until seven or eight of our men glided into the brush and concealing themselves until their left wing approached within about 30 feet of them before they shot a gun, they then raised and attacked them in the flank. The Indians did not stop to return the fire, but retreated through the brush as fast as possible, dragging their wounded along with them and leaving their dead on the spot. In the meantime myself and the remainder of our party were closely engaged with the center and right. I took advantage of a large tree which stood near the edge of the brush between the Indians and our horses. They approached until the smoke of our guns met. I kept a large German horse pistol loaded by me in case they should make a charge when my gun was empty. When I first stationed myself at the tree I placed a hat on some twigs which grew at the foot of it and would put it in motion by kicking the twigs with my foot in order that they might shoot at the hat and give me a better chance at their heads, but I soon found this sport was no joke for the poor horses behind me were killed and wounded by the balls intended for me. The Indians stood the fight for about two hours, then retreated through the brush with a dismal lamentation. We then began to look about to find what damage they had done us. One of our comrades was found under the side of an old root, wounded by balls in three places in the right and one in the left leg below the knee, no bones having been broken. Another had received a slight wound in the groin. We lost three horses, killed on the spot, and several more were wounded, but not so bad as to be unable to travel. Towards night some of our men followed down the stream about a mile and found the place where they had stopped and laid their wounded comrades on the ground in a circle. The blood was still standing congealed in nine places where they had apparently been dressing the wounds. 29th—Staid at the same place, fearing no further attempt by the same party of Indians. 30th—Traveled up the main branch about 10 miles. July 1st, traveled to the southeast extremity of the valley and encamped for the night. Our wounded comrade suffered very much in riding, although everything was done which lay in our power to ease his sufferings. A pallet was made upon the best gaited horse belonging to the party for him to ride on and

one man appointed to lead the animal. On the 2d we crossed the Teton mountains in an easterly direction, about 15 miles. The ascent was very steep and rugged, covered with tall pines, but the descent was somewhat smoother.

CHAPTER V.

"Jackson's Hole"—A Dismal Fourth of July Experience Which Terminates Without Serious Mishap—Lost.

Here we again fell on to Lewis' Fork, which runs in a southerly direction through a valley about 80 miles long, there turning to the mountains through a narrow cut in the mountain to the mouth of Salt river, about 30 miles. This valley was called "Jackson Hole." It is generally from 5 to 15 miles wide. The southern part where the river enters the mountains is hilly and uneven, but the northern portion is wide, smooth and comparatively even, the whole being covered with wild sage and surrounded by high and rugged mountains upon whose summits the snow remains during the hottest months in summer. The alluvial bottoms along the river and streams intersecting it through the valley produced a luxuriant growth of vegetation, among which wild flax and a species of onion were abundant. The great altitude of this place, however, connected with the cold descending from the mountains at night, I think would be a serious obstruction to the growth of most kinds of cultivated grains. This valley, like all other parts of the country, abounded with game.

Here we again attempted to cross Lewis Fork with a bull skin boat. July 4th, our boat being completed we loaded it with baggage and crossed to the other side, but on returning ran it into some brush when it instantly filled and sank, but without further accident than the loss of the boat. We had already forded half the distance across the river upon horseback and were now upon an island in the middle, having previously driven our horses to the other shore. We now commenced making a raft of logs that had drifted on the island. On this, when completed, we put the remainder of our equipment about 2 o'clock p. m. and 10 of us started with it for the other side, but we no sooner reached the rapid current than our raft, which was constructed of large timber, became unmanageable and all efforts to reach either side were vain and, fearing lest we should run on to the dreadful rapids to which we were fast approaching, we abandoned the raft and committed ourselves to the mercy of the current. We being all tolerably good swimmers excepting myself, I would fain have called for help, but at this critical period every one had to shift for himself. Fortunately I scrambled to the shore among the best swimmers. We were now on the side from whence we started without a

single article of bedding except an old cloth tent, whilst the rain poured incessantly. Fortunately we had built a large fire previous to our departure on the raft, which was still burning.

I now began to reflect on the miserable condition of myself and those around me—without clothing, provisions or firearms and drenched to the skin with rain.

I thought of those who were perhaps at that moment celebrating the anniversary of our independence in my native land or seated around tables loaded with the richest dainties that a rich, independent and enlightened country could afford, or perhaps collected in the gay salon relating the heroic deeds of our ancestors or joining in the nimble dance, forgetful of cares and toils, whilst here presented a group of human beings crouched round a fire which the rain was fast diminishing, meditating on their deplorable condition, not knowing at what moment we might be aroused by the shrill war cry of the hostile savages with which the country was infested, whilst not an article for defense, excepting our butcher knives remained in our possession.

The night at length came on and we lay down to await the events of the morrow. Daylight appeared and we started down along the shore in hopes of finding something that might get loose from the raft and drift upon the beach. We had not gone a mile when we discovered the raft lodged on a gravel bar which projected from the island, where it had been driven by the current. We hastened through the water waist deep to the spot, where to our great surprise and satisfaction we found everything safe upon the raft in the same manner we had left it. We also discovered that the river, with some difficulty, could be forded on horseback at this place. Accordingly we had our horses driven across to us, packed them up, mounted and crossed without further accident, and the day being fair, we spent the remainder of it and the following day in drying our equipage. 7th—Left the river and followed up a stream called the Grosbent Fork in an easterly direction about eight miles. This stream was very high and rapid. In fording it we lost two rifles. 8th—We followed the stream through the mountains east, passing through narrow defiles, over rocky precipices and deep gulches for 15 miles. 9th—Traveled up the stream about 10 miles east, then turned up a left hand fork about eight miles northeast and encamped among the high, rough mountains, thickly covered with pine timber. There was not a man in the party who had ever been at this place or at the Yellowstone lake where we intended to go, but our leader received information respecting the route from some person at the fort and had written the direction on a piece of paper which he carried with him. They directed us to go from the place where we now were due north, but he said the directions must be wrong as he could discover no passage through the mountains to the north of us. 10th—We took a narrow defile which led us in an easterly direction about 12 miles,

on to a stream running southeast. This we followed down about six miles when the defile opened into a beautiful valley about 15 miles in circumference, through which the stream ran in the direction above stated and entered the mountains on the east side. Here a dispute arose about the part of country we were in. Our leader maintained that this was a branch of the Yellowstone river, but some of the trappers had been in this valley before and knew it to be a branch of Wind river. They pointed out their old encampment and the beaver lodges where they had been trapping two years previous. But our man at the helm was inflexible; he commanded the party and had a right to call the streams by what names he pleased, and as a matter of course this was called the Yellowstone. Three of the party, however, called it Wind river and left us, but not before one of them had given our charge d'affaires a sound drubbing about some small matters of little importance to any one but themselves. 11th—We left the stream and crossed the valley in a northeasterly direction, ascended a high point of mountain, thickly covered with pines, then descended over cliffs and crags, crossing deep gulches, among the dark forests of pines and logs until about noon, when we came into a smooth grassy spot about a mile in circumference, watered by a small rivulet which fell from the rocks above, passed through the valley and fell into a chasm on the southeast side among the pines. On the north and west were towering rocks, several thousand feet high, which seemed to overhang this little vale. Thousands of mountain sheep were scattered up and down feeding on the short grass which grew among the cliffs and crevices, some so high that it required a telescope to see them. Our wounded companion suffered severely by this day's travel and our director concluded to remain at this place the next day. He now began to think that these were not the waters of the Yellowstone, as all the branches ran southeast. Finally he gave it up and openly declared he could form no distinct idea what part of the country we were in. 12th—Myself and another had orders to mount two of the best mules and ascend the mountain to see if we could discover any pass to the northwest of us. We left the camp and traveled in a northerly direction about two miles, then turning to our left around a high point of perpendicular rock entered a narrow glen which led northwest up the mountain. Through this we directed our course, ascending over the loose fragments of rock which had fallen from the dark, threatening precipices that seemed suspended in the air above us on either side, for about five miles, when the ascent became so steep that we were obliged to dismount and lead our mules. After climbing about a mile further we came to large banks of snow 8 or 10 feet deep and so hard that we were compelled to cut steps with our butcher knives to place our feet in, whilst our mules followed in the same track. These places were from 50 to 200 yards across and so steep that we had to use both hands and feet dog-like in climbing

over them. We succeeded in reaching what we at first supposed to be the summit, when another peak appeared in view, completely shrouded with snow, dotted here and there with a few dwarfish, weather-beaten cedars. We now seated ourselves for a few minutes to rest our wearied limbs and gaze on surrounding objects near us. On either hand were large bands of mountain sheep carelessly feeding upon the short grass and herbage which grew among the crags and cliffs, whilst crowds of little lambs were nimbly skipping and playing upon the banks of snow. After resting ourselves a short time, we resumed our march over the snow, leaving the mules behind. We reached the highest summit in about a mile of travel. On the top of this elevation was a flat place of about a quarter of a mile in circumference. On the west and north of us was presented one vast pile of huge mountains crowned with snow, but none appeared so high as the one on which we stood. On the south and east nothing could be seen in the distance but the dense, blue atmosphere. We did not prolong our stay at this place for the north wind blew keen and cold as the month of January in a northern climate. We hurried down to where we had left the mules in order to descend to a more temperate climate before the night came on. Our next object was to find a place to descend with our mules, it being impossible to retrace our steps without the greatest danger. After hunting around some time, we at length found a place on the northeast side where we concluded to try it. We drove our mules on to the snow which, being hard and slippery, their feet tripped and after sliding about 300 feet they arrived in a smooth green spot at the foot of the declivity. We then let ourselves down by cutting steps with our butcher knives and the breeches of our guns. After traveling down out of the snow we encamped on a smooth, green spot and turned our mules loose to feed. At sunset we built a large fire, ate supper and laid down to sleep. The next morning at day break I arose and kindled a fire and seeing the mules grazing at a short distance, I filled my tobacco pipe and sat down to smoke. Presently I cast my eyes down the mountain and discovered two Indians approaching within 200 yards of us. I immediately aroused my companion who was still sleeping. We grasped our guns and presented them upon the intruders upon our solitude. They quickly accosted us in the Snake tongue, saying they were Shoshonies and friends to the whites. I invited them to approach and sit down, then gave them some meat and tobacco. They seemed astonished to find us here with mules, saying they knew of but one place where they thought mules or horses could ascend the mountain, and that was in a northeasterly direction. The small stream which was formed by the melting of the snow above us, after running past where we sat, rushed down a fearful chasm and was lost in spray. After our visitors had eaten and smoked we began to question them concerning their families and the country around them. They said their families were some distance

below in a northerly direction and that there was a large lake beyond all the snowy peaks in sight to the northwest. They also pointed out the place where we could descend the mountain and told us that this stream ran down through the mountain and united with a larger stream which, after running a long distance north, turned toward the rising of the sun into a large plain, where there was plenty of buffalo and Crow Indians. After getting this desired information we left these two sons of the wilderness to hunt their sheep and we to hunt our camp as we could. We traveled over a high point of rocks chiefly composed of granite and coarse sandstone. In many places we saw large quantities of petrification, nearly whole trees broken in pieces from one to three feet long completely petrified. We also saw immense pieces of rock on the top of the mountain composed of coarse sand pebbles and sea shells of various kinds and sizes. After crossing the summit we fell into a defile which led a winding course down the mountain. Near the foot of this defile we found a stone jar which would contain three gallons, neatly cut from a piece of granite, well shaped and smooth. After traveling all day over broken rocks, fallen timber and rough country we arrived at the camp about dark.

On the 14th we raised camp and traveled north northeast over rough, craggy spurs about 15 miles and encamped in a narrow glen between two enormous peaks of rocks. As we were passing along over a spur of the mountain we came to a place from which the earth had slid at some previous period and left the steep inclined ledge bare and difficult to cross. Our horses were obliged to place their feet in the small holes and fissures in the rock to keep themselves from sliding off. An unfortunate pack horse, however, missed his footing and slid down the declivity near the brink of a deep and frightful canyon through which the cataract nearby dashed some hundred feet below. Fortunately his foot caught in some roots which projected from a crevice in the rock and arrested his terrible course until we could attach ropes to him and drag him from his perilous situation. 15th—We followed the windings of the glen east as far as we could ride, and then all dismounted and walked except the wounded man, who rode until the mountain became so steep his horse could carry him no longer. We then assisted him from his horse and carried or pushed him to the top of the divide over the snow. In the meantime it commenced snowing very hard. After gaining the summit we unloaded our animals and rushed them on to the snow on the other side, which being hard they went helter-skelter down to a warmer climate and were arrested by a smooth, grassy spot. We then lowered the wounded man down by cords and put our saddles and baggage together on the snow, jumped on the top and started slowly at first, but the velocity soon increased, until we brought up tumbling heels over head in a grassy bench in a more moderate climate. Now we were down, but whether we could get out was a question yet to be solved.

Tremendous, towering mountains of rocks surrounded us excepting on the southeast, where a small stream ran from the snow into a dismal chasm below. But for my part I was well contented for an eye could scarcely be cast in any direction around, above or below, without seeing the fat sheep gazing at us with anxious curiosity or lazily feeding among the rocks and scrubby pines. The bench where we encamped contained about 500 acres nearly level. 16th—We staid at this place as our wounded comrade had suffered severely the day before. Some went down the stream to hunt a passage, while others went to hunt sheep. Being in camp about 10 o'clock I heard the faint report of a rifle overhead. I looked up and saw a sheep tumbling down the rocks, which stopped close to where I stood, but the man who shot it had to travel three or four miles before he could descend with safety to the camp. The sheep were all very fat, so that this could be called no other than high living, both as regarded altitude of position and rich provisions. 17th—Traveled down the stream through difficult and dangerous passage about 10 miles, where we struck another branch on the left. This we ascended due north about eight miles and encamped on another green spot near the snow at the head of the glen. 18th—We ascended the mountain at the head of this branch and crossed the divide and descended another branch, which ran in a northerly direction, about eight miles, and encamped in an enormous gorge. 19th—Traveled about 15 miles down stream and encamped on the edge of a plain. 20th—Traveled down to the two forks of this stream, about five miles, and stopped for the night. Here some of the trappers knew the country. This stream was called Stinking river, a branch of the Big Horn which, after running about 40 miles through the big plain, enters the above river about 15 miles above the lower Big Horn mountain. It takes its name from several hot springs about five miles below the forks, producing a sulphurous stench which is often carried by the wind to the distance of five or six miles. Here were also large quarries of gypsum almost transparent, of the finest quality, and also appearances of lead with large, rich beds of iron and bituminous coal. We stopped at this place and rested our animals until the 23d. By this time our wounded comrade had recovered so far as to be able to hobble about on crutches.

24th—We took up the right hand fork in a northwesterly direction about 15 miles, through a rugged defile in the mountain. 25th—Traveled about 18 miles in the same direction, still following the stream, which ran very rapid down through the dense piles of mountains, which are formed of granite, slate and sand stone, covered with pines where there was sufficient soil to support them. 26th—Followed the stream almost due north about eight miles and encamped, where we staid the next day.

CHAPTER VI.

In the Yellowstone Country—A Garden of Eden Inhabited by Small Party of Snake Indians.

On the 28th we crossed the mountain in a westerly direction through the thick pines and fallen timber, about 12 miles, and encamped in a small prairie about a mile in circumference. Through this valley ran a small stream in a northerly direction, which all agreed in believing to be a branch of the Yellowstone. 29th—We descended the stream about 15 miles through the dense forest and at length came to a beautiful valley about eight miles long and three or four wide, surrounded by dark and lofty mountains. The stream, after running through the center in a northwesterly direction, rushed down a tremendous canyon of basaltic rock, apparently just wide enough to admit its waters. The banks of the stream in the valley were low and skirted in many places with beautiful cottonwood groves.

Here we found a few Snake Indians comprising six men, seven women and 8 or 10 children, who were the only inhabitants of the lonely and secluded spot. They were all neatly clothed in dressed deer and sheep skins of the best quality and seemed to be perfectly contented and happy. They were rather surprised at our approach and retreated to the heights where they might have a view of us without apprehending any danger, but having persuaded them of our pacific intentions we succeeded in getting them to encamp with us. Their personal property consisted of one old butcher knife nearly worn to the back, two old, shattered fuses which had long since become useless for want of ammunition, a small stone pot and about 30 dogs on which they carried their skins, clothing, provisions, etc., on their hunting excursions. They were well armed with bows and arrows pointed with obsidian. The bows were beautifully wrought from sheep, buffalo and elk horns, secured with deer and elk sinews, and ornamented with porcupine quills and generally about three feet long. We obtained a large number of elk, deer and sheep skins from them of the finest quality, and three large, neatly dressed panther skins, in return for awis, axes, ketties, tobacco, ammunition, etc. They would throw the skins at our feet and say, "Give us whatever you please for them and we are satisfied; we can get plenty of skins but we do not often see the Tibuboes" (or people of the sun). They said there had been a great many beavers on the branches of this stream, but they had killed nearly all of them and, being ignorant of the value of fur had singed it off with fire in order to drip the meat more conveniently. They had seen some whites some years previous who had passed through the valley and left a horse behind, but he had died during the first winter. They are never at a loss for fire, which they produce by the friction of two pieces of wood which are rubbed together with a quick and steady motion. One of them drew a map of the country around us on a white elk skin with a

piece of charcoal, after which he explained the direction of the different passes, streams, etc. From these we discovered that it was about one day's travel in a southwesterly direction to the outlet or northern extremity of the Yellowstone lake, but the route, from his description being difficult, and beaver comparatively scarce, our leader gave up the idea of going to it this season, as our horses were much jaded and their feet badly worn. Our geographer also told us that this stream united with the Yellowstone after leaving this valley half a day's travel in a westerly direction. The river then ran a long distance through a tremendous cut in the mountain in the same direction and emerged into a large plain the extent of which was beyond his geographical knowledge or conception. 30th—We stopped at this place and for my own part I almost wished I could spend the remainder of my days in a place like this, where happiness and contentment seemed to reign in wild, romantic splendor, surrounded by majestic battlements which seemed to support the heavens and shut out all hostile intruders.

Another Man Lost.

31st—We left the valley and descended the stream by a narrow, difficult path, winding among the huge fragments of basaltic rock for about 12 miles, when the trail came to an end and the towering rocks seemed to overhang the river on either side, forbidding further progress of man or beast, and obliged us to halt for the night. About dark some of our trappers came to camp and reported one of their comrades to be lost or met with some serious accident. The next day we concluded to stop at this place for the lost man and four men went in search of him, and returned at night without any tidings of him whatever. It was then agreed that either his gun had bursted and killed him or his horse had fallen with him over some tremendous precipice. He was a man about 55 years of age and of 30 years' experience as a hunter. Our leader concluded that further search was useless in this rocky, pathless and pine covered country.

August 2d we forded the Yellowstone with some difficulty to the south side. The river at this place was about 200 yards wide and nearly swimming to horses. A short distance below it rushes down a chasm with a dreadful roar echoing among the mountains. After crossing we took up a steep and narrow defile in a southerly direction and on gaining the summit in about three miles, we found the country to open south and west of us into rolling prairie hills. We descended the mountain and encamped on a small stream running west. 3d—Traveled about 25 miles due west, the route broken and uneven in the latter part of the day and some places thickly covered with pines. Encamped at night in a valley called "Gardner's Hole." This valley was about 40 miles in circumference, surrounded, except on the north and west, by low, puny mountains. On the west was a high, narrow range of mountains running north and south, dividing the waters of the Yellowstone from those of Gallatin Fork of the Missouri.

We stopped in this valley until the 20th, the trappers being continually employed in hunting and trapping beaver.

On the 21st we crossed the mountains through a defile in a westerly direction and fell on to a small branch of the Gallatin. Here we encamped on a small, clear spot and killed the fattest elk I ever saw. It was a large bull. The fat on his rump measured seven inches thick. He had 14 spikes or branches on the left horn and 12 on the right. 22d—After we had started in the morning, five of our party (four trappers and one camp tender) secretly dropped behind with their packs and riding horses and took a different direction, forming a party of their own, but they could not be much blamed for leaving, as our fractious leader was continually wrangling with the trappers by endeavoring to exercise his authority tyrannically. We followed down this branch to the Gallatin, about 10 miles west, encamped and staid the next day. 24th—Down the Gallatin north northwest, the river running between two high ranges of mountains, skirted along the bank by a narrow valley. 25th—Left the defile and took up the Gallatin in an easterly direction, crossed the mountain and fell on to a stream running into the Yellowstone, and finding no beaver, returned to the Gallatin the next day the route we had come. 28th—Up the Gallatin to the place where we had struck it on the 22d. 29th—Took up the stream a southerly course about 10 miles, then left it to the left hand and proceeded about four miles south through a low pass and fell on to a branch of the Madison Fork of the Missouri running south. This we followed down about six miles further and encamped, where we staid next day. This pass was formed by the minor ranges of hills or spurs on the two high ranges of mountains on either side of us, which approach toward each other and terminate in a low defile completely covered with pines except along the stream, where small prairies may be found thickly clothed with grass, forming beautiful encampments.

CHAPTER VII.

Encounter With the Blackfeet Indians—Join Bridger's Party for Protection and Assistance.

31st—Traveled southwest down the stream about 10 miles, when we came to the "Burnt Hole," a prairie valley about 80 miles in circumference, surrounded by low spurs of pine-covered mountains which are the sources of great numbers of streams which, by uniting in this valley form the Madison Fork. Sept. 1st—Traveled down the stream about 12 miles northwest and encamped during a heavy snowstorm. This stream, after leaving the valley, enters a gorge in the mountains in a northwesterly direction. 2d—We stopped in the entrance of this gorge until the 8th. Traveled down about 15 miles, where the country opened into a large plain through which the stream turned in a sweeping curve due north. 9th—Crossed the valley in a westerly direction, traveled up a small branch and encamped about three miles from the river in a place with high bluffs on each side of us. We had been encamped about an hour when 14 white trappers came to us in full gallop. They were of Mr. Bridger's party who was encamped at Henry's Lake, about 20 miles in a southerly direction, and expected to arrive at the Madison the next day. His party consisted of 60 white men and about 20 Flathead Indians. The trappers remained with us during the night, telling mountain "yarns" and the news from the States. Early next morning eight of them started down the stream to set traps on the main fork, but returned in about an hour, closely pursued by about 80 Blackfeet. We immediately secured our horses in a yard, previously made for the purpose, and prepared for battle. In the meantime the Indians had gained the bluffs and commenced shooting into the camp from both sides. The bluff on the east side was very steep and rocky, covered with tall pines, the foot approaching within 40 yards of us. On the west the bluffs were covered with thick groves of quaking asps. From these heights they poured in fusée balls without mercy or even damage, except killing out animals which were exposed to their fire. In the meantime we concealed ourselves in the thicket around the camp to await a nearer approach, but they were too much afraid of our rifles to come near enough for us to use ammunition. We lay almost silently about three hours, when finding they could not arouse us to action by their long shots, they commenced setting fire to the dry grass and rubbish with which we were surrounded. The wind blowing brisk from the south, in a few moments the fire was converted into one circle of flame and smoke which united over our heads. This was the most horrible position I was ever placed in. Death seemed almost inevitable, but we did not despair, and all hands began immediately to remove the rubbish around the encampment and setting fire to it to act against the flames that were hovering over our heads. This plan proved successful beyond our expectations. Scarce half an hour had elapsed when the fire

had passed around us and driven our enemies from their position. At length we saw an Indian whom we supposed to be the chief standing on a high point of rock and giving the signal for retiring, which was done by taking hold of the opposite corners of his robe, lifting it up and striking it three times on the ground. The cracking of guns then ceased and the party moved off in silence. They had killed two horses and one mule on the spot and five more were badly wounded. It was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon when the firing ceased. We then saddled and packed our remaining animals and started for Mr. Bridger's camp, which we found on the Madison at the place where we had left it. Our party was now so disabled from the previous desertion of men and loss of animals that our leader concluded to travel with Mr. Bridger until we should arrive at the forks of the Snake river where the latter intended to pass the winter.

On the 11th myself with five others returned to the battle ground to get some traps which had been set for beaver on the stream above our encampment, whilst the main camp was to travel down the river about five miles and stop the remainder of the day to await our return. We went for the traps and returned to the camp about 3 o'clock p. m. 12th—At sunrise an alarm of "Blackfeet!" echoed through the camp. In a moment all were under arms and inquiring "where are they?" when 'twas replied, "on the hills to the west." I cast a glance along the high range of hills which projected toward the river from the mountain and discovered them standing in a line in a ridge. In their center stood a small pole and from it waved an American flag, displaying a wish to make peace. About 30 of us walked up within about 300 yards of their line, when they made a signal for us to halt and send two men to meet the same number of theirs and treat for peace. Two of the whites who could speak the Blackfoot language were appointed to negotiate, while the respective lines sat upon the ground to await the event. After talking and smoking for half an hour the negotiators separated and returned to their respective parties. Ours reported them to be a party of Pagans, a small tribe of the Blackfeet, who desired to make peace with the whites and for that purpose had procured the flag from an American trading post on the Missouri. There were 45 members, well armed and equipped. We gave them a general invitation to our camp, which they accepted with a great deal of reluctance when they were informed of the battle on the 10th, but arriving at the camp and receiving friendly treatment, their fears in a manner subsided. After smoking several rounds of the big pipe, the chief began to relate his adventures. He said he had been in several battles with the whites and some of the party were at the battle in "Pierre's Hole" on the 28th of June, last, in which there were four Indians killed on the spot and eight died of their wounds on the way to the village, but he denied having any knowledge of the late battle, but said there were several parties of the Blood Indians lurking about the mountains around us. They stopped with us until nearly

night and all left except one, who concluded to remain. 13th—We left the Madison Fork with Mr. Bridger's camp and ascended a small branch in a westerly direction through the mountains about 20 miles, and encamped on the divide. After we had encamped a Frenchman started down the mountain to set his traps for beaver, contrary to the advice and persuasion of his comrades. He had gone but a few miles when he was fired upon by a party of Blackfeet, killed and scalped.

On the 14th we traveled down the mountain about 15 miles northwest, and encamped on a stream called "Stinking Creek," which runs into the Jefferson Fork of the Missouri. After we had encamped some trappers ascended the stream but were driven back by the Blackfeet. Others went below and shared the same fate from another party, but escaped to the camp unhurt. 15th—Moved down this stream about 12 miles north. This part of the country was comprised of high, bald hills on either side of the stream, which terminated in rough, pine-covered mountains. 16th—Traveled down the stream northwest about eight miles. The valley opened wider as we descended and large numbers of buffalo were scattered over the plains and among the hills. 17th—Down about 10 miles northwest, the mountains on the west descending to a sloping spur, from thence to a plain. 18th—We did not raise camp, and about noon some Flathead Indians arrived and told us their village was on a branch of the Jefferson called "Beaverhead Creek," about 30 miles in a westerly direction. The next day we went to their village, which consisted of 180 lodges of Flatheads and Pend d'Oreilles (or hanging ears). Here we found a trading party belonging to the Hudson Bay Company. They were under the direction of Mr. Francis Ermatinger, who was endeavoring to trade every beaver skin as fast as they were taken from the water by the Indians. 20th—The whole cavalcade moved en masse up the stream about 12 miles southwest and encamped with another village of the same tribe consisting of 130 lodges.

From this place was a large plain, slightly undulating, extending nearly to the junction of the three forks of the Missouri. The Flatheads were a brave, friendly, generous and hospitable tribe, strictly honest, with a mixture of pride which exalts them far above the rude appellation of savages, when contrasted with the tribes around them. They boast of never injuring the whites and consider it a disgrace to their tribe if they are not treated like brothers whilst in company with them. Sorcery, fornication and adultery are severely punished. Their chiefs are obeyed with a reverence due to their station and rank.

23d—We left the village in company with Mr. Bridger and his party and traveled southeast across the plain about six miles to the foot of the hills and encamped at a spring. 24th—Traveled about 18 miles southeast over high, rolling hills, beautifully clothed with bunch grass. 25th—Traveled in the same direction 12 miles and encamped in a smooth val-

ley about 80 miles in circumference, surrounded on the north and east by a high range of mountains. At the northeast extremity was a marshy lake about 12 miles in circumference. From this flowed the head stream of the Jefferson Fork of the Missouri, which curved to the southwest through the valley and entered the low mountains on the west through a narrow cut, still continuing the curve encircling a large portion of country previous to its arrival at the junction. 26th—Crossed the valley about 16 miles and encamped on the east side. This valley, as a mountaineer would say, was full of buffalo when we entered it and large numbers of them were killed by our hunters. We repeatedly saw signs of Blackfeet about us to waylay the trappers. 27th—We stopped at this place and encamped on Camas creek on the northwest extremity of the great plain of Snake river. Here the leader of our party desired me to go to Fort Hall and get some horses to assist them to the fort, as we were dependent on Mr. Bridger for animals to move camp.

CHAPTER VIII.

Dispatched for Horses—Perfidy of Leader Suspected—Two Days Without Water—Finally Reaches Fort Hall.

30th—After getting the necessary information from our leader, I started, contrary to the advice and remonstrances of Mr. Bridger and his men, rather than be impeached of cowardice by our autocratic director. I traveled according to his directions south until dark amid thousands of buffaloes. The route was very rocky and my horse's feet (he not being shod) were worn nearly to the quick, which caused him to limp very much. After traveling about 30 miles I lay down and slept sound during the night. The next morning I arose and proceeded on my journey down the stream. About 9 o'clock I came to where it formed a lake, where it sank in the dry, sandy plain. From this I took a southeasterly course as directed, towards a high butte which stood in the almost barren plain. By passing to the east of this butte I was informed that it was about 25 miles to Snake river. In this direction I traveled until about two hours after dark. My horse had been previously wounded by a ball in the loins and though nearly recovered before I started, yet traveling over the rocks and gravel with tender feet and his wound together had nearly exhausted him. I turned him loose among the rocks and wild sage and laid myself down to meditate on the follies of myself and others. In about two hours I fell asleep to dream of cool springs, rich frosts and cool shades. In the morning I arose and looked around me. My horse was near by me picking the scanty blades of sunburned grass which grew among the sage. On surveying the place I found I could go no further in a south or east direction as there lay before me a range of broken, basaltic rock which appeared

to extend for five or six miles on either hand and five or six miles wide thrown together promiscuously in such a manner that it was impossible for a horse to cross them. The butte stood to the southwest about 10 miles, which I was informed was about half the distance from Camas lake to Snake river. I now found that either from ignorance or some other motive less pure our leader had given me directions entirely false, and came to the conclusion to put no further confidence in what he had told me, but return to the lake I had left, as it was the nearest water I knew of. This point being settled, I saddled my horse and started on foot leading him by the bridle, and traveled all day in the direction of the lake over the hot sand and gravel. After daylight disappeared I took a star for my guide, but it led me south of the lake, where I came on to several large bands of buffalo which would start on my near approach and run in all directions. It was near midnight when I laid down to rest. I had plenty of provisions, but could not eat. Water! Water was the object of my wishes. Traveling for two days in the hot, burning sun without water is by no means a pleasant way of passing the time. I soon fell asleep and dreamed again of bathing in the cool rivulets issuing from the snow topped mountains. About an hour before day I was awakened by the howling of wolves, they having formed a complete circle within 30 paces of me and my horse. At the flashing of my pistol, however, they soon dispersed. At daylight I discovered some willows about three miles distant to the west where large numbers of buffalo had assembled, apparently for water. In two hours I had dispersed the brutes and lay by the water side. After drinking and bathing for half an hour I traveled up the stream about a mile and lay down among some willows to sleep in the shade, whilst my horse was carelessly grazing among the bushes. The next day being the 4th, I lay all day and watched the buffalo, which were feeding in immense bands all about me. 5th—I arose in the morning at sunrise and looking to the southwest I discovered the dust arising in a defile which led through the mountain about five miles distant. The buffaloes were carelessly feeding all over the plain as far as the eye could reach. I watched the motion of the dust for a few minutes, when I saw a body of men on horseback pouring out of the defile among the buffalo. In a few minutes the dust raised to the heavens. The whole mass of buffaloes became agitated, producing a sound resembling distant thunder. At length an Indian pursued a cow close to me. Running alongside of her he let slip an arrow and she fell. I immediately recognized him to be a Bannock with whom I was acquainted. On discovering me he came to me and saluted me in Snake, which I answered in the same tongue. He told me the village would come and encamp where I was. In the meantime he pulled off some of his clothing and hung it on a stick as a signal for the place where his squaw should set his lodge. He then said he had killed three fat cows but would kill one more and stop. So saying

he wheeled his foaming charger and the next moment disappeared in the cloud of dust. In about a half hour the old chief came up with the village and invited me to stop with him, which I accepted. While the squaws were putting up and stretching their lodges I walked out with the chief on to a small hillock to view the field of slaughter, the cloud of dust having passed away, and the prairie was covered with the slain. Upward of one thousand cows were killed without burning one single grain of gun powder. The village consisted of 332 lodges and averaged six persons, young and old, to each lodge. They were just returned from the salmon fishing to feast on fat buffalo. After the lodges were pitched I returned to the village. This chief was called "Aiken-lo-ruckkup" (or the tongue cut with a flint). He was the brother of the celebrated Horn Chief who was killed in a battle with the Blackfeet some years before, and it was related by the Bannocks, without the least scruple, that he was killed by a piece of antelope horn, the only manner in which he could have been taken, as he was protected by a supernatural power from all other harm. My worthy host spared no pains to make my situation as comfortable as his circumstances would permit. The next morning I took a walk through the village and found there were fifteen lodges of Snakes with whom I had formed an acquaintance the year before. On my first entering the village I was informed that two white trappers belonging to Mr. Wyeth's party had been lately killed by the Bannocks in the lower country and that the two Indians who had killed or caused them to be killed, were then in this village. The old chief had pointed them out to me as we walked through the village, and asked me what the white men would do about it. I told him they would hang them if they caught them at the fort. He said it was good; that they deserved death, for said he, "I believe they have murdered the two white men to get their property, and lost it all in gambling, for," continued he, "ill gained wealth often flies away and does the owners no good. But," said he, "you need not be under any apprehension of danger whilst you stop with the village." The squaws were employed cutting and drying meat for two days, at the end of which the ground on which the village stood seemed covered with meat scaffolds bending beneath their rich loads of fat buffalo meat.

13th—My horse being somewhat recruited, I left the village with a good supply of boiled buffalo tongue prepared by my landlady, and the necessary directions and precautions from the old chief. I traveled due east about 25 miles, which brought me to the forks of Snake river. When approaching to the waters I discovered fresh human footprints. I immediately turned my horse and rode out from the river about a quarter of a mile, intending to travel parallel with the river in order to avoid any straggling party of Blackfeet, which might be secreted in the timber growing along the bank. I had not gone far when I discovered three Indians on horseback running a bull toward me. I jumped my horse into a

ravine and out of sight and crawled up among the high sage to watch their movements. As they approached nearer to me I saw they were Snakes and showed myself to them. They left the bull and galloped up to me. After the usual salutation I followed them to their village, which was on the east bank of the river. The village consisted of 15 lodges under the direction of a chief called "Comb Daughter" by the Snakes and by the whites the "Lame Chief." He welcomed me to this lodge in the utmost good humor and jocular manner I had ever experienced among Indians, and I was sufficiently acquainted with the Snake language to repay his jokes in his own coin without hesitation. I passed the time very agreeably for six days among those simple but well fed and good humored savages.

On the 19th, learning that Bridger was approaching the forks and the party of hunters to which I had belonged had passed down the river toward the fort, I mounted my horse, started down the river and arrived at the fort next day about noon, the distance being about 60 miles south southwest. When I arrived the party had given up all hopes of ever seeing me again and had already fancied my lifeless body lying on the plains, after having been scalped by the savages.

CHAPTER IX.

Enlistment Expires and the Author Joins Bridger's Company as a Trapper—Bull Meat Straight.

The time for which myself and all of Mr. Wyeth's men were engaged had recently expired, so that now I was independent of the world and no longer to be termed a "greenhorn." At least I determined not to be so green as to bind myself to an arbitrary Rocky Mountain chieftain to be kicked over hill and dale at his pleasure.

November 15th, Captain Thing arrived from the Columbia with supplies for the fort. In the meantime the men about the fort were doing nothing and I was lending them a hand until Mr. Wyeth should arrive and give us our discharge.

Dec. 20th Mr. Wyeth arrived, when I bid adieu to the "Columbia River Fishing and Trading Company" and started in company with 15 of my old messmates to pass the winter at a place called "Mutton Hill," on Portneuf, about 40 miles southeast from Fort Hall. Mr. Wyeth had brought a new recruit of sailors and Sandwich islanders to supply our places at the fort. We lived on fat mutton until the snow drove us from the mountains in February. Our party then dispersing, I joined Mr. Bridger's company who were passing the winter on Blackfoot creek, about 15 miles from the fort, where we staid until the latter part of March. Mr. Bridger's men lived very poor and it was their own fault, for the valley was cov-

ered with fat cows when they arrived in November, but instead of approaching and killing their meat for winter they began to kill by running on horseback, which had driven the buffaloes all over the mountain to the head of the Missouri, and the snow falling deep they could not return during the winter. They killed plenty of bulls, but they were so poor that their meat was perfectly blue, yet this was their only article of food, as bread or vegetables were out of the question in the Rocky Mountains except a few kinds of roots of spontaneous growth, which the Indians dig and prepare for food. It would doubtless be amusing to a disinterested spectator to witness the process of cooking poor bull meat as practiced by this camp during the winter of 1835-6. On going through the camp at any time in the day heaps of ashes might be seen with the fire burning on the summit and an independent looking individual, who is termed a camp kicker, sitting with a "two year old club" in his hand watching the pile with as much seeming impatience as Philoctete did the burning of Hercules. At length poking over the ashes with his club, it bounds five or six feet from the ground like a huge ball of gum elastic. This operation frequently repeated divests the ashes adhering to it and prepares it for carving. He then drops his club and draws his butcher knife, calling to his comrades: "Come Major, Judge, Squire, Dollar Pike, Cotton and Gabe, won't you take a lunch of Simon?" each of whom acts according to the dictates of his appetite in accepting or refusing the invitation. I have often witnessed these philosophical and independent dignitaries collected round a bull's ham just torn from a pile of embers, good-humoredly observing as they hacked the huge slices from the lean mass that this was tough eating but that it was tougher where there was none, and consoling themselves with a promise to make the fat cows suffer before the year rolled around. The camp remained on Blackfoot until the latter part of March, when the winter broke up and we commenced traveling and hunting beaver.

We left winter quarters on the 28th and traveled along the foot of the mountain in a northerly direction to Lewis Fork and ascended it southeast to the mouth of Muddy creek, where we arrived on the 7th of April. Here Mr. Bridger ordered a party of 12 trappers to branch off to the right and hunt the head waters of Gray and Blackfoot creeks. I was included in the number and felt anxious to try my skill in trapping.

10th—We set off, leaving the main camp, to proceed leisurely to Saltrim valley and from thence to the mouth of Thomas Fork of Bear river, where we were instructed to meet them. We ascended Muddy creek and crossed the mountain on to Gray's creek. Here we found the snow disappearing very fast and the streams so much swollen that we made but slow progress in taking beaver. We traveled the numerous branches of this stream to and fro, setting traps where the water would permit, until the 25th of April, when we left the

waters of Gray's creek and traveled about 40 miles in a southwest direction from where we had struck it, crossed a low mountain about eight miles and fell on to Blackfoot. This we ascended two days and hunted until the 5th of May, when three of our party were waylaid and fired upon by a party of Blackfeet whilst ascending the stream through a canyon. One of them was slightly wounded in the side by a fusee ball, but all escaped to the camp and reported the Indians to be about 25 in number. On the 7th of May we left Blackfoot and crossed the mountain southwest through deep snow and thick pines and at night fell into the valley on Bear river and encamped about 25 miles above the soda springs. 8th—Traveled up Bear river to Thomas Fork, where we found the main camp, likewise Mr. A. Dripps and his party, consisting of about 60 whites and nearly as many half breeds, who were encamped with 400 lodges of Snakes and Bannocks and 100 lodges of Nez Perces and Flatheads. 9th—We all camped together in the beautiful plain on Bear river above the mouth of Smith's Fork. 11th—The whole company of Indians and whites left Bear river and traveled to Ham's Fork, excepting Mr. Dripps and a small party, who went round to Black's Fork of Green river to get some furs and other articles deposited there in the ground. After reaching Ham's Fork the Indians concluded to separate in different directions as we were in too large a body and had too many horses to thrive long together. They were instructed to be on the mouth of Horse creek on Green river about the 1st of July, as we expected supplies from the United States about that time. We laid about on the branches of Green river until the 28th of June, when we arrived at the destined place of rendezvous. On the 1st of July Mr. Wyeth arrived from the mouth of the Columbia on his way to the United States, with a small party of men.

CHAPTER X.

Rendezvous at Green River—Meeting Revs. Whitman and Spaulding and Their Wives on their Way to Oregon.

On the 3d the outfit arrived from St. Louis, consisting of 40 men having 20 horse carts drawn by mules and loaded with supplies for the ensuing year. They were accompanied by Dr. Marcus Whitman and lady, Mr. H. H. Spaulding and lady and Mr. W. H. Gray, Presbyterian missionaries, on their way to the Columbia to establish a mission among the Indians in that quarter. The two ladies were gazed upon with wonder and astonishment by the rude savages, they being the first white women ever seen by these Indians and the first that had ever penetrated into these wild and rocky regions.

We remained at the rendezvous until the 16th of July and then began to branch off into parties for the fall hunt in different directions.

Mr. Bridger's party, as usual, was destined for the Blackfoot country. It contained most of the American trappers and amounted to 60 men. I started with a party of 15 trappers and two camp keepers, ordered by Mr. Bridger to proceed to the Yellowstone lake and there await his arrival with the remainder of his party. July 24th we set off and traveled up Green river 25 miles in a northerly direction. 25th—Up Green river 15 miles in the same direction, then left it to our right and took up a small branch, still keeping a northeast course. The course of the river where we left it turns abruptly to the east and heads in a high, craggy mountain, covered with snow, about 30 miles distant. This mountain is a spur of the Wind River range and is commonly called the Sweetwater mountain, as that stream heads in its southern termination. After leaving the river we traveled about four miles to the head of the branch and encamped in a smooth, grassy plain on the divide between Green and Snake rivers, which head within 200 paces of each other at this place. 26th—Traveled north about 15 miles, descending a small stream through a rough, mountainous country covered with pine trees and underbrush, and encamped on the Grosvent Fork. 27th—We descended the Grosvent Fork to "Jackson's Hole," about 20 miles, general course west. 28th—We followed Lewis Fork through the valley, crossing several large streams coming in from the east. We then left the valley and followed the river about five miles through a piece of rough, piney country, and came to Jackson's lake, which is formed by the river. We encamped at the outlet at a small prairie about a mile in circumference. This lake is about 25 miles long and three miles wide, lying north and south, bordered on the east by pine swamps and marshes extending

from one to two miles from the lake, to the spurs of the mountain. On the southwest stands the three Tetons, whose dark, frightful forms rising abruptly from the lake, towering above the clouds, casts a gloomy shade upon the waters beneath, whilst the water rushes in torrents down the awful precipices from the snow by which they are crowned. The high range of mountains on the west, after leaving the Tetons, slope gradually to the north and spread into low piney mountains. This place, like all other marshes and swamps among the mountains, is infested with innumerable swarms of horseflies and mosquitoes, to the great annoyance of man and beast during the day, but the cold air descending from the mountain at night compels them to seek shelter among the leaves and grass at an early hour. Game is plentiful and the river and lake abound with fish. After hunting the streams and marshes about this lake we left it on the 7th of August and traveled down Lewis Fork about four miles to the second stream running into it on the east side below the lake. This we ascended about 12 miles east and encamped among the pines close to where it emerged from a deep canyon in the mountain. 8th—We took across a high spur thickly covered with pines, intermingled with brush and fallen timber, in a northeast direction for about 12 miles, where we fell into a small valley on a left hand branch of the stream we had left. 9th—We took up this branch due north about 10 miles when, it turning short to the right, we left it and ascended a narrow glen, keeping a north course, sometimes traveling through thick pines and then crossing small green spots through which little streams were running from the remaining banks of snow lying among the pines in the shade of the mountains, for about six miles, when we came to a smooth prairie about two miles long and half a mile wide lying east and west, surrounded by pines. On the south side, about midway of the prairie, stood a high snowy peak from whence issued a stream of water which, after entering the plain, divided equally, one-half running west and the other east, thus bidding adieu to each other, one bound for the Pacific and the other for the Atlantic ocean. Here a trout of 12 inches in length may cross the mountains in safety. Poets have sung of the "meeting of the waters" and fish climbing cataracts, but the "parting of the waters and fish crossing mountains" I believe remains unsung as yet by all except the solitary trapper who sits under the shade of a spreading pine whistling blank verse and beating time to the tune with a whip on his trap sack whilst musing on the parting advice of those waters. 10th—We took down the east branch and followed it about eight miles to the Yellowstone river, which is about 80 yards wide and at the shallowest place nearly swimming to our horses. To this place it comes from a deep gorge in the mountains, enters a valley lying north and south about 15 miles long and three miles wide, through which it winds its way slowly to the north through swamps and marshes and calmly reposes in the

bosom of the Yellowstone lake. The south extremity of this valley was smoother and thickly clothed with high meadow grass, surrounded by high, craggy mountains topped with snow. We stopped at this place trapping until the 3d of August, when we traveled down the lake to the inlet or southern extremity.

CHAPTER XI.

Interesting Description of What Is Now Known as Yellowstone National Park.

16th—Mr. Bridger came up with the remainder of the party. 18th—The whole camp moved down the east shore of the lake through thick pines and fallen timber about 18 miles, and encamped in a small prairie. 19th—Continued down the shore to the outlet about 20 miles, and encamped in a beautiful plain which extended along the northern extremity of the lake. This valley was interspersed with scattering groves of tall pines, forming shady retreats for the numerous elk and deer during the heat of the day. The lake is about 100 miles in circumference, bordered on the east by high ranges of mountains whose spurs terminate at the shore and on the west by a low bed of piney mountains. Its greatest width is about 15 miles, lying in an oblong form south to north, or rather in the shape of a crescent. Near where we encamped were several hot springs which boiled perpetually. Near these was an opening in the ground about eight inches in diameter from which hot steam issued continually with a noise similar to that made by the steam issuing from a safety valve of an engine, and could be heard five or six miles distant. I should think the steam issued with sufficient force to work an engine of 30 horsepower. We encamped about 3 o'clock p. m. and after resting our horses about an hour seven of us were ordered to go and hunt some streams running into the Yellowstone some distance below the lake. We started from the camp in an easterly direction, crossed the plain and entered the pines, and after travelling about an hour through dense forests we fell into a broken tract of country which seemed to be all on fire at some distance below the surface. It being very difficult to get around this place, we concluded to follow an elk trail across it for about half a mile. The treading of our horses sounded like traveling on a plank platform covering an immense cavity in the earth, whilst the hot water and steam were spouting and hissing around us in all directions. As we were walking and leading our horses across this place the horse that was before me broke through the crust with one hind foot and the blue steam rushed forth from the hole. The whole place was covered with a crust of limestone of a dazzling whiteness, formed by the overflowing of the boiling water. Shortly after leaving

this resemblance of the infernal regions, we killed a fat elk and camped at sunset in a smooth, grassy spot between two high shaggy ridges, watered by a small stream which came tumbling down the gorge behind us. As we had passed the infernal regions, we thought as a matter of course this must be a commencement of the Elysian fields, and accordingly commenced preparing a feast. A large fire was soon blazing, encircled with sides of elk ribs and meat cut in slices, supported on sticks, down which the grease ran in torrents. The repast being over, the jovial tale goes round the circle, the peals of loud laughter break upon the stillness of the night which, after being mimicked in the echo from rock to rock dies away in the solitary gloom. Every tale reminds an auditor of something similar to it but under different circumstances which, being told, the "laughing part" gives rise to increasing merriment and furnishes more subjects for good jokes and witty sayings, such as a Swift never dreamed of. Thus the evening passed, with eating, drinking and stories, enlivened with witty humor until near midnight all being wrapped in their blankets lying round the fire gradually falling to sleep one by one, until the last tale is encored by the snoring of the drowsy audience. The speaker takes the hint, breaks off the subject and wrapping his blanket more closely about him soon joins the snoring party. The light of the fire being superseded by that of the moon just rising from behind the eastern mountain, a sulen gloom is cast over the remaining fragments of the feast and all is silent except the occasional howling of the solitary wolf on the neighboring mountain, whose senses are attracted by the flavor of roasted meat, but fearing to approach nearer, he sits upon a rock and bewails his calamities in piteous moans which are re-echoed among the mountains.

Aug. 20—Took over a high, rugged mountain about 12 miles northeast, and fell into the secluded valley which I have described in my last year's journal. There we found some of those indifferent and happy natives of whom I gave a description. We traded some beaver and dressed skins from them and hunted the streams running into the valley for several days. There is something in the wild romantic scenery of this valley which I cannot, nor will I attempt to, describe, but the impressions made upon my mind while gazing from a high eminence on the surrounding landscape one evening as the sun was gently gliding behind the western mountains and casting its gigantic shadow across the vale were such as time can never efface from my memory, but as I am neither poet, painter nor romance writer I must content myself to be what I am—a humble journalist—and leave this beautiful vale in obscurity until visited by some more skillful admirer of the beauties of nature, who may chance to stroll this way at some future period.

25th—Left the valley and traveled down to the Yellowstone and crossed it at the ford. 26th—Crossed the mountain in a southwest direction and fell on to Gardner's Fork. Here

myself and another set some traps and stopped for the night whilst the remainder of the party went in different directions to hunt setting. 27th—Crossed the mountain southwest to "Gardner's Hole," where we found the main camp. 28th—Camp left "Gardner's Hole" and traveled north to the Yellowstone about 20 miles. 29th—The whole party followed the river out of the mountain into the great Yellowstone plain, distance about 12 miles. The trappers then scattered out in small parties of from two to five in number, leaving Mr. Bridger with 25 camp keepers to travel slowly down the river. Myself and another traveled down the river about 40 miles northeast to a branch called "25 Yard River." This we ascended about 25 miles in a northerly direction, where we remained trapping several days. The country lying on this stream is mostly comprised of high rolling ridges, thickly clothed with grass and herbage and crowded with immense bands of buffalo, intermingled with bands of antelope.

CHAPTER XII.

Laughable and Serious Engagements With Bands of Black-foot Indians—"Howell's Encampment."

Sept. 1st—We returned to the camp, which we found at the mouth of this stream, where we found also 10 Delaware Indians who had joined the camp in order to hunt beaver with greater security. 2d—Traveled down the Yellowstone river about 20 miles. This is a beautiful country, the large plains widely extending on either side of the river, intersected with streams and occasional low spurs of mountains, whilst thousands of buffaloes may be seen in almost every direction and deer, elk and grizzly bear are abundant. The latter are more numerous than in any other part of the mountains, owing to the vast quantities of cherries, plums and other wild fruits which this section of country affords. In going to visit my traps, a distance of three or four miles, early in the morning, I have frequently seen seven or eight standing about the clumps of cherry bushes on their hind legs, gathering cherries with surprising dexterity, not even deigning to turn their grizzly heads to gaze at the passing trapper, but merely casting a sidelong glance at him without altering their position. 3d—Left the camp on the Yellowstone and started across a low and somewhat broken tract of country in a southeasterly direction to a stream called the Rosebud, accompanied by another trapper. 5th—The camp came to us on the Rosebud and the next day passed on in the same direction, whilst myself and comrade stopped behind to trap. 7th—We overtook the camp on a stream called Rocky Fork, a branch of Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone. When we arrived at camp we were told the sad news of the death of a French trapper named Bodah, who had been waylaid and killed by a party of Black-foot while setting his traps, and one of the Delawares had been shot through the hip by the rifle of one of his comrades going

off accidentally, and several war parties of Blackfeet had been seen scouting about the country. We had been in camp but a few minutes when two trappers rode up whom we called "Major Meek" and "Dave Crow." The former, a tall Virginian who had been in the mountains some 12 years, was riding a white Indian pony. On dismounting some blood was discovered which had apparently been running down his horse's neck and dried on the hair. He was immediately asked where he had been and what was the news. "News!" exclaimed he, "I have been, me and Dave, over on to Prior's Fork to set our traps and found old Benj. Johnson's boys there, just walking up and down them 'ar streams with their hands on their hips gathering plums. They gave me a tilt and turned me a somerset or two, shot my horse, "Too Shebit," in the neck and sent us heels over head in a pile together, but we raised a-runnin'. Gabe, do you know where Prior leaves the cut bluffs, goin' up it?" "Yes," replied Bridger. "Well, after you get out of the hills on the right hand fork there is scrubby box elders about three miles along the creek up to where a little right hand spring branch puts in with lots and slivers of plum trees about the mouth of it and some old beaver dams at the mouth on the main creek. Well, sir, we went up there and set yesterday morning. I set two traps right below the mouth of that little branch and in them old dams, and Dave set his down the creek apiece. So after we had got our traps set we cruised around and eat plums a while. The best plums I ever saw is there. The trees are loaded and breaking down to the ground with the finest kind, as large as pheasant eggs and sweet as sugar. They'll almost melt in yo' mouth; no wonder them rascally savages like that place so well. Well, sir, after we had eat what plums we wanted me and Dave took down the creek and staid all night on a little branch in the hills, and this morning started to our traps. We came up to Dave's traps and in the first there was a four-year-old 'spade,' the next was false licked, went to the next and it had cut a foot and none of the rest disturbed. We then went up to mine to the mouth of the branch. I rode on five or six steps ahead of Dave and just as I got opposite the first trap I heard a rustling in the bushes within about five steps of me. I looked round and pop, pop, pop went the guns, covering me with smoke so close that I could see the blanket wads coming out of the muzzle. Well, sir, I wheeled and a ball hit Too Shebit in the neck and just touched the bone and we pitched heels over head, but Too Shebit raised runnin' and I on his back and the savages jist squattin' and grabbin' at me, but I raised a fog for about half a mile till I overtook Dave."

The foregoing story was corroborated by "Dave," a small, inoffensive man, who had come to the Rocky Mountains with General Ashley some 15 years before and remained ever since, an excellent hunter and a good trapper. The next day we moved down the stream to its junction with Clark's Fork, within about three miles of the Yellowstone. On the following morning two men went to set traps down on the river

and as they were hunting along the brushy banks for places to set, a party of 60 Blackfeet surrounded them, drove them into the river and shot after them as they were swimming across on their horses. One by the name of Howell was shot by two fusee balls through the chest, the other escaped unhurt. Howell rode within half a mile of camp, fell and was brought in on a litter. He lived about 20 hours and expired in the greatest agony imaginable. About an hour after he was brought in 20 whites and Delawares went to scour the brush along the river and fight the Blackfeet. Having found them they drove them on to an island and fought them till dark. The loss on our side during the battle was a Nez Perce Indian killed and one white slightly wounded in the shoulder. The Blackfeet who were fortified on the island, drew off in the night, secreting their dead and carrying off their wounded. The next day we interred the remains of poor Howell at the foot of a large cottonwood tree and called the place "Howell's encampment," as a compliment to his memory.

11th—We traveled on to Prior's Fork and struck it where the Major's traps were setting, a distance of 25 miles southeast. 12th—Stopped at this place and gathered plums. 13th—Traveled east 12 miles to the left hand fork of Prior. 14th—The snow fell all day and on the 15th it was 15 inches deep. 16th—We returned to the west fork of Prior and stopped the next day. 18th—The snow being gone, we returned to Clark's Fork. 19th—Seven of us left the camp and traveled to Rock Fork near the mountain, a distance of 35 miles, course southwest. We all kept together and set our traps on Rocky Fork near the mountain. We had been here five days when a party of Crow Indians came to us, consisting of 49 warriors. They were on their way to the Blackfoot village to steal horses. They staid with us two nights and then went to the camp which had come on to this stream about twenty miles below us.

28th—Another party of Crows came to us, consisting of 110 warriors. We went with them to the camp, which we found about 10 miles below. They remained with the camp the next day and then left for the Blackfoot village, which they said was at the three forks of the Missouri. 30th—We traveled with the camp west on to the Rosebud. Oct. 1st—The trappers scattered out in every direction to hunt beaver on the branches of the Rosebud and continued to the 10th, when we followed the camp down the Yellowstone, where Mr. Bridger had concluded to pass the winter. The small streams being frozen, trapping was suspended and all collected to winter quarters, where were thousands of fat buffalo feeding in the plains, and we had nothing to do but slay and eat. Oct. 25—The weather becoming fine and warm, some of the trappers started again to hunt beaver. Myself and another started to Prior's Fork and set our traps on the east branch, where we staid six days. We then crossed a broken piece of country about 12 miles northeast and fell on to a stream running northeast into the Big Horn, called "Bovy's Fork." Here we

set traps and staid 10 days. This section of country was very uneven and broken but abounded with buffalo, elk, deer and bear. Among other spontaneous productions of this country were hops, which grew in great abundance and of a superior quality. Thousands of acres along the small branches, the trees and shrubbery were completely entangled in the vines. 11th—The weather becoming cold, the streams froze over again, and we started for camp, which we found on Clark's Fork about a mile above "Howell's encampment." The camp stopped at this place until Christmas, then moved down about four miles on to the Yellowstone. The bottoms along these rivers were heavily timbered with sweet cottonwood, and our horses and mules were very fond of the bark, which we stripped from the limbs and gave them every night, as the buffalo had entirely destroyed the grass throughout this part of the country. We passed away the time very agreeably, our only employment being to feed our horses, kill buffalo and eat, that is to say, the trappers. The camp keepers' business in winter quarters is to guard the horses, cook and keep fires. We all had snug lodges made of dressed buffalo skins, in the center of which we built a fire and generally comprised about six men to the lodge. The long winter evenings were passed away by collecting in some of the most spacious lodges and entering into debates, arguments or spinning long yarns until midnight, in perfect good humor, and I for one will cheerfully confess that I have derived no little benefit from the frequent arguments and debates held in what we termed "The Rocky Mountain College," and I doubt not but some of my comrades who considered themselves classical scholars, have had some little added to their wisdom in the assemblies, however rude they might appear.

On the 28th of January myself and six more trappers concluded to take a cruise of five or six days after buffalo. The snow was about four inches deep and the weather clear and cold. We took seven loose animals to pack meat, and traveled up Clark's Fork about 12 miles, killed a cow and encamped. The next morning we started across toward Rock Fork and had gone about three miles over the smooth plain, gradually ascending to a range of hills which divided Clark's Fork from Rock, when, riding carelessly along with our rifles lying before us on our saddles, we came to a deep, narrow gulch, made by the water running from the hills in the spring season. Behold, the earth seemed teeming with naked savages. A quick volley of fuses, a shower of balls and a cloud of smoke clearly bespoke their nation, tribe, manners and customs, and mode of warfare. A ball broke the right arm of one man and he dropped his rifle, which a savage immediately caught up and shot after us as we wheeled and scampered away out of the reach of their guns. There were about 80 Indians, who had secreted themselves until we rode within 15 feet of them. They got a rifle clear gain, and we had one man wounded and lost a rifle, so they had so much the advantage, and we were obliged to go to camp and study out

some plan to get even, as by the two or three skirmishes we had fallen in their respect.

A few days afterwards a party of 20 were discovered crossing the plain to the river about six miles below us. Twenty men immediately mounted and set off and arrived at the place just as they had entered the timber. They ran into some old rotten Indian forts formed of small poles in a conical shape. The whites immediately surrounded and opened fire on them, which was kept up until darkness and the severity of the weather compelled them to retire. We had one man wounded slightly through the hip and one Delaware was shot in the leg by a poisoned ball, which lodged under the knee cap. He lived four days and expired. On examining the battle ground next day we found that three or four at least had been killed and put under the ice in the river. Seven or eight had been badly wounded, which they dragged away on trains to their village. We found that the old forts were not bullet proof in any place. Our rifle balls had whistled through them nearly every shot and blood and brains lay scattered about inside on the shattered fragments of rotten wood.

CHAPTER XIII.

Brilliant Display of "Northern Lights" Probably Averts Annihilation of the Camp by Indians.

February 22d—Mr. Bridger, according to his usual custom, took his telescope and mounted a high bluff near the encampment to look out for "squalls," as he termed it. About 1 o'clock p. m. he returned appearing somewhat alarmed, and on being asked the cause, he said the great plain below was alive with savages, who were coming across the hills to the timber about 10 miles below us. From this place the river runs in a northeasterly direction, bearing east. On the north and west side is a plain from 6 to 10 miles wide, bordered by rough, broken hills and clay bluffs. On the south and east the river runs along the foot of a high range of steep bluffs, intersected by deep ravines and gulches. Along the river are large bottoms, covered with large cottonwood timber and clear of underbrush. All hands commenced to build a breast work around the camp, which was constructed of logs and brush piled horizontally six feet high around the camp, inclosing about 250 feet square.

This being completed, at dark a double guard was mounted and all remained quiet, but it was a bitter cold night. I mounted guard from 9 till 12 o'clock. The weather was clear, the stars shone with an unusual lustre and the trees cracked like pistols. About 10 o'clock the northern lights commenced streaming up, darting, flashing, rushing to and fro like the movements of an army. At length the shooting and flashing died away and gradually turned to a deep blood red, spreading over one-half of the sky. This awful and sub-

lime phenomenon (if I may be allowed to mingle such terms) lasted nearly two hours, then gradually disappeared, and being relieved by the morning guard, I went to bed and slept soundly till sunrise. The next day we were engaged strengthening the fortress by cutting timber from 12 to 18 inches in diameter, standing them inside on end, leaning them on the breastwork close together. This was completed about noon. About 2 o'clock Mr. Bridger and six men mounted and went to reconnoiter the enemy, but returned soon after with the intelligence that they were encamped about three miles below on the river and there was a multitude of them on foot. 24th—The night passed without any disturbance and we began to fear we should not have a fight after all our trouble. About sunrise one solitary savage crept up behind the trees and shot about 200 yards at Mr. Bridger's cook as he was gathering wood outside the fort, then scampered off without doing any damage.

A Spaniard was ordered on to the bluff to look out, and found an Indian in the observatory built on the top, who waited until the Spaniard approached. The Indian then raised and the Spaniard wheeled and took to his heels. The Indian shot and the ball struck him in the heel as he made a 50-foot leap down the bluff and slid down the snow to the bottom. In about half an hour the word was passed that they were coming on the ice and presently they appeared, coming round a bend of the river in close columns within 400 yards. They then turned off to the right into the plain and called a halt. The chief, who wore a white blanket, came forward a few steps and gave us the signal that he should not fight, but return to his village. They then turned and took a northwest course across the plain toward the three forks of the Missouri. We came to the conclusion, after numerous conjectures, that the wonderful appearance of the heavens a few nights previous, connected with our strong fortification, had caused them to abandon the ground without an attack, which is very probable, as all Indians are very superstitious. We supposed, on examining their camp next day that their numbers must have been about eleven hundred, who had started from their village with the determination of rubbing us from the face of the earth, but that the Great Spirit had shown them that their side of the heavens was bloody, whilst ours was clear and serene.

February 28th we left our winter quarters on the Yellowstone and started for the Big Horn, the snow being six inches deep on an average. We traveled slowly and reached it in eight days at the mouth of Bovy Fork, about 15 miles below the lower Big Horn mountain, and then began to slay and eat, but we slayed so much faster than we ate that our meat scaffolds groaned under the weight of fat buffalo meat. We remained here amusing ourselves with playing ball, hopping, wrestling, running foot races, etc., until the 14th of March, when we discovered the Crow village moving down the Big Horn toward us. Immediately all sports were ended. Some

mounted horses to meet them, others fortified camp, ready for battle in case there should be a misunderstanding between us. The scouting party soon returned with some of the chiefs, accompanied by an American who was trading with them, in the employ of the American Fur Company. The chiefs, after smoking and looking about some time, returned to their village, which had encamped about three miles above on the river. The next morning they came and encamped within 300 yards of us. Their village contained 200 lodges and about 200 warriors. The Crows are a proud, haughty, insolent tribe, whenever their party is the strongest, but if the case is reversed they are equally cowardly and submissive. This village was called "Long Hair's" band, after their chief, whose hair was 11 feet 6 inches long, done up in an enormous queue about 18 inches long and six inches thick, hanging down his back. He was about 80 years of age and seemed to be afflicted with the dropsy, the only case of the kind I ever knew among the mountain Indians. The village staid with us until the 25th of March and then moved down the river about six miles.

We left the Big Horn on the 1st of April and started on the spring hunt. On the 3d up Bovy's Fork 20 miles. 4th—Up the same 10 miles. After we had encamped four Delawares who were cruising about in the hills hunting buffalo, fell in with a party of 10 or 12 Blackfeet, killed one on the spot, and wounded several more. The Blackfeet then took to their heels and left the victorious Delawares without loss except one horse being slightly wounded in the neck. 10th—We arrived at "Howell's encampment" at the mouth of Rocky Fork. The whole country here was filled with buffaloes, driven this way by the Crow village. 11th—We raised a cache of beaver and other articles which had been deposited in the ground in November previous. 14th—A party of 12 trappers and two camp keepers started to trap the "Mussel Shell" river, which heads in the mountain near "25 Yard" river, and runs into the Missouri on the south side above the mouth of the Yellowstone. Myself and three others traveled up Rocky Fork about 20 miles, but found so much snow and ice that we could not set our traps for beaver. We found a large cave on the south-east side of a perpendicular rock. In this we encamped six days, during which we made great havoc among the buffaloes. On the 23d the camp moved up to our cave and the next day I went up the stream about 12 miles and set my traps and saw signs of several war parties of Blackfeet who were scouting about the country. 26th.—I was cruising with another trapper through the timber and brush above where we had set our traps when on a sudden we came within 10 steps of two Blackfoot forts and saw the smoke ascending from the tops. As we saw no individuals we entered and found the Indians had been gone about half an hour. 28th—The party arrived from the Mussel Shell, having been defeated and lost one trapper and nearly all their horses and traps by the Blackfeet.

May 1st—All being collected, we left Rocky Fork close to the mountain and took around the foot in an easterly direction and encamped at a spring, where we staid the next day. The Blackfeet still continued dogging at our heels and to steal now and then a horse which might get loose in the night. There is a proverb among mountaineers that "It is better to count ribs than tracks." That is to say, it is better to fasten a horse at night until you can count his ribs from poverty than turn him loose to fatten and count his tracks after an Indian has stolen him. 3d—Traveled on to Clark's Fork 12 miles southeast, and the next day up the same 15 miles south. 5th—Traveled to a small branch running into Stinking river, southerly direction 15 miles. 6th—We encamped on Stinking river about 15 miles below the works, distance 12 miles, course southeast. 7th—We traveled from the river about 20 miles in a southerly direction and encamped at a spring. 8th—To the "Gray Bull" Fork of the Big Horn. 9th—To the Medicine Lodge Fork, 12 miles south. 10th—To the Middle Fork of the Medicine Lodge, eight miles. 11th—To the South Fork of the Medicine Lodge, eight miles south. Here we staid two days. 14th—Traveled southeast to a small spring at the foot of the upper Big Horn mountain, distance 12 miles. The 15th traveled to the top of the Big Horn mountain and encamped on the divide. The country over which we had traveled since we left "Stinking" was much broken by spurs of mountains and deep gullies, entirely destitute of timber except along the banks of the streams. 16th—Traveled down the mountain on the south side and encamped on a small branch of Wind river. This river loses its name whilst passing through the upper Big Horn mountain. From thence it takes the name of the Big Horn, derived from the vast numbers of mountain sheep or big horn inhabiting the mountains through which it passes. 17th—Over broken country south about 15 miles. 18th—Encamped on the river after a march of 10 miles south. 19th—The camp intending to stop here several days, I started with a raw son of Erin to hunt beaver on the head waters of the river. We traveled up west about 25 miles to what was called the "Red Rock." Killed a sheep and encamped for the night where several branches of the river united. 20th—We took up a large branch about 15 miles, northwest, and found the water overflowing the banks of all the branches so much that it was impossible to catch beaver. We then altered our course northeast across the country in order to examine the small branches on our right, but finding all our efforts to trap useless and discovering that a war party consisting of 80 Blackfeet were in pursuit of us, we returned to the camp by a different route on the 23d. 24th—Traveled with the camp to the North Fork of "Popo-azla" or Pope river, one of the principal branches of Wind river, distance 12 miles, course south. 25th—To the middle Fork of the same stream, eight miles distance. 26th—To the oil spring on the South Fork of Popo-azla. This spring produced about one gallon per hour of pure oil or coal or rather coal tar, the scent of which is often carried on the wind five or six miles. The oil issues

from the ground within 30 feet of the stream and runs off slowly into the water. Camp stopped here eight days. We set fire to the spring when there was two or three barrels of oil on the ground about it. It burned very quick and clear but produced a dense column of thick, black smoke. The oil above ground being consumed, the fire soon went out. This was a beautiful country, thickly clothed with grass, intermingled with flowers of every hue. On the west rose the Wind River range of mountains abruptly from the smooth, rolling hills, until crowned with snow above the clouds. On the east stretched away the great Wind River plain and terminated at a low range of mountains rising between Wind and Powder rivers. Buffalo, elk and sheep were abundant. Beds of iron and coal were frequently found in this part of the country.

June 5th we left the oil spring and took over a point of mountain about 15 miles southwest and encamped on a small spring branch. 6th—Crossed the spurs of mountains due west 12 miles and encamped on a branch of Sweetwater. 7th—Traveled west about 15 miles and encamped on "Little Sandy," a branch of Green river. 8th—Traveled north up the valley about 18 miles and encamped on a stream called the New Fork of Green river, where we staid the next day. 10th—Traveled west to the main river, about 25 miles, and struck the river about 12 miles below the mouth of Horse creek.

CHAPTER XIV.

Another Rendezvous at Green River—Making "Good Indians" —Arrival of Wagon Train and Supplies.

Here we found the hunting parties all assembled waiting for the arrival of supplies from the States. Here presented what might be termed a mixed multitude. The whites were chiefly Americans and Canadian French, with some Dutch, Scotch, Irish, English, halfbreed and fullblood Indians of nearly every tribe in the Rocky Mountains. Some were gambling at cards, some playing the Indian game of "hand" and others horse racing, while here and there could be seen small groups collected under shady trees relating the events of the past year, all in good spirits and health, for sickness is a stranger seldom met with in these regions. Sheep, elk, deer, buffalo and bear skins mostly supply the mountaineers with clothing, bedding and lodges, while the meat of the same animals supply them with food. They have not the misfortune to get any of the luxuries from the civilized world but once a year, and then in such small quantities that they last but a few days.

We had not remained in this quiet manner long before something new arose for our amusement. The Bannock Indians had for several years lived with the whites on terms partly hostile, frequently stealing horses and traps and in one instance killed two white trappers. They had taken some

horses and traps from a party of French trappers who were hunting Bear river in April prevlous, and they were now impudent enough to come with the village of 60 lodges and encamp within three miles of us in order to trade with the whites as usual, still having the stolen property in their possession and refusing to give it up. On the 15th of June four or five whites and two Nez Perce Indians went to their village and took the stolen horses (whilst the men were out hunting buffalo) and returned with them to our camp. About 3 o'clock p. m. of the same day 30 Bannocks came riding at full gallop up to the camp, armed with their war weapons. They rode into the midst and demanded the horses which the Nez Perces had taken, saying they did not wish to fight with the whites. But the Nez Perces, who were only six in number, gave the horses to the whites for protection, which we were bound to give, as they were numbered among our trappers and far from their own tribe. Some of the Bannocks on seeing this, started to leave the camp. One of them as he passed me observed that he did not come to fight whites; but another, a fierce looking savage, who still stopped behind, called out to the others, saying, "We came to get horses or blood and let us do it." I was standing near the speaker and understood what he said. I immediately gave the whites warning to be in readiness for an attack. Nearly all the men in camp were under arms. Mr. Bridger was holding one of the stolen horses by the bridle when one of the Bannocks rushed through the crowd, seized the bridle and attempted to drag it from Mr. Bridger by force, without heeding the cocked rifles that surrounded him any more than if they had been so many reeds in the hands of children. He was a brave Indian, but his bravery proved fatal to himself, for the moment he seized the bridle two rifle balls whistled through his body. The others wheeled to run, but 12 of them were shot from their horses before they were out of reach of rifle. We then mounted horses and pursued them, destroyed and plundered their village and followed and fought them three days, when they begged us to let them go and promised to be good Indians in future. We granted their request and returned to our camp, satisfied that the best way to negotiate and settle disputes with hostile Indians is with the rifle, for that is the only pen that can write a treaty which they will not forget. Two days after we left them three white trappers, ignorant of what had taken place, went into their village and were treated in the most friendly manner. The Indians said, however, they had been fighting with the Blackfeet.

July 5th a party arrived from the States with supplies. The cavalcade consisted of 45 men and 20 carts drawn by mules, under the direction of Mr. Thomas Fitzpatrick, accompanied by Captain William Stewart on another tour of the Rocky Mountains.

Joy now beamed in every countenance. Some received letters from their friends and relations; some received the public papers and news of the day; others consoled them-

selves with the idea of getting a blanket, a cotton shirt or a few pints of coffee and sugar to sweeten it just by way of a treat, gratis, that is to say, by paying 2,000 per cent on the first cost by way of accommodation. For instance, sugar \$2 per pint, coffee the same, blankets \$20 each, tobacco \$2 per pound, alcohol \$4 per pint and common cotton shirts \$5 each, etc. And in return paid \$4 or \$5 per pound for beaver. In a few days the bustle began to subside. The furs were done up in packs ready for transportation to the States and parties were formed for hunting the ensuing year. One party, consisting of 110 men, was destined for the Blackfoot country, under the direction of L. B. Fontanelle as commander and James Bridger pilot. I started, with five others, to hunt the headwaters of the Yellowstone, Missouri and Big Horn rivers, a portion of the country I was particularly fond of hunting.

CHAPTER XV.

Back Again to the Hunting Grounds—Solitary Reflections on a Peak of the Rockies.

On the 20th of July we left the rendezvous and traveled up Green river about 10 miles. 21st—We traveled up Green river till noon, when we discovered a trail of 8 or 10 Blackfeet and a buffalo fresh killed and butchered, with the meat tied up in small bundles on the ground, which they had left on seeing us approach, and ran into the bushes. We, supposing them to be a small scouting party, tied their bundles of meat on to our saddles and still kept on our route, but had not gone far before we discovered them secreted among some willows growing along a branch which crossed our trail. I was ahead leading the party when I discovered them. We stopped and one of my comrades, whose name was Allen, began to arrange the load on his pack mule. In the meantime I reined my horse to the left and rode onto a small hillock near by and casting a glance towards the bushes which were about 150 yards distant, I saw two guns pointed at me. I instantly wheeled my horse but to no purpose. The two balls struck him, one in the loins and the other in the shoulder, which dropped him under me. The Indians at the same time jumped out of the bushes, 60 or 70 in number, and ran toward us, shooting and yelling. I jumped on a horse behind one of my comrades and we scampered away toward the rendezvous, where we arrived at dark. 25th—The parties started and all traveled with Mr. Fontanelle's party up Green river 10 miles, intending to keep in their company five or six days and then branch off to our first intended route. 26th—We traveled 20 miles northwest across a low range of hills and encamped in a valley lying on a branch of Lewis Fork called "Jackson's Little Hole." 27th—We traveled down this stream 18 miles northwest. This stream ran through a tremendous mountain in a deep, narrow canyon of rocks. The

trail ran along the cliffs from 50 to 200 feet above its bed and was so narrow in many places that only one horse could pass at a time for several hundred yards, and one false step would precipitate one into the chasm below. After leaving the canyon we encamped at a small spring in "Jackson's Big Hole," near the southern extremity. 28th—Traveled up the valley north 15 miles and encamped. Killed some buffalo and staid next day. 30th—Left the camp in company with two trappers and one camp keeper. We received instructions from Mr. Fontanelle to meet the camp at the mouth of Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone on the 15th of the ensuing October, where they expected to pass the winter, but he said if he should conclude to change his winter quarters he would cause a tree to be marked at Howell's grave and bury a letter in the ground at the foot of it containing directions for finding the camp.

We traveled north till near sunset and encamped about 40 miles from the main party. 31st—We traveled to the fork five miles below Jackson's lake and ascended it in the same direction I had done the season before and encamped about 15 miles from the valley. August 1st—We reached the dividing spring about 4 o'clock p. m. and stopped for the night. 2d—We encamped at the inlet of the Yellowstone lake. 3d—Traveled down the east shore of the lake and stopped for the night near the outlet at the steam springs. 4th—We took our course east northeast and after traveling all day over rugged mountains, thickly covered with pines and underbrush, we encamped at night about 10 miles north of the secluded valley, on the stream which runs through it. After we had encamped we killed a deer, which came in good time, as we had eaten the last of our provisions the night previous at the Yellowstone lake and the flies and mosquitoes were so bad and the underbrush so thick that we had not killed anything during the day. 5th—We traveled up a left hand branch of this stream northeast 15 miles through the thick pines and brush until near the head, where we encamped in a beautiful valley about two miles in circumference, almost encircled with huge mountains whose tops were covered with snow, from which small rivulets were issuing clear as crystal and, uniting in the smooth, grassy vale, formed the stream we had ascended. We concluded to spend the next day at this place as there were no flies or mosquitoes, for though warm and pleasant in the day, the nights were too cold for them to survive. The next day, after eating a light breakfast of roasted venison, I shouldered my rifle and ascended the highest mountain on foot. I reached the snow in about an hour when, seating myself upon a huge fragment of granite and having full view of the country around me in a few moments was almost lost in contemplation. This, said I, is not a place where heroes' deeds of chivalry have been achieved in days of yore, neither is it a place of which bards have sung until the world knows the precise posture of every rock and tree or the winding turn of every streamlet. But on the contrary those stupendous rocks whose surface is

formed into irregular benches, rising one above another from the vale to the snow, dotted here and there with low pines and covered with green herbage intermingled with flowers, with the scattered flocks of sheep and elk carelessly feeding or thoughtlessly reposing beneath the shade, having Providence for their founder and preserver and Nature for shepherd, gardner and historian. In viewing scenes like this the imagination of one unskilled in science wanders to the days of the Patriarchs and after numerous conjecturing returns without any fixed decision. Wonder is put to the test, but having no proof for its argument, a doubt still remains, but supposition steps forward and taking the place of knowledge in a few words solves the mysteries of ages, centuries and eras. After indulging in such a train of reflections for about two hours I descended to the camp where I found my companions had killed a fat buck elk during my absence and some of the choicest parts of it were supported on sticks around the fire. My ramble had sharpened my appetite and the delicious flavor of roasted meat soon rid my brain of romantic ideas. My comrades were men who never troubled themselves about vain and frivolous notions as they called them. With them every country was pretty when there was weather, and as to beauty of nature or arts, it was all a "humbug" as one of them, an Englishman, often expressed it. "Talk of a fine country," said he, "and beautiful places in these mountains. If you want to see a beautiful place, go to Highland and see the Duke of Rutland's place." "Aye," says a son of Erin, who sat opposite, with an elk rib in one hand and a butcher knife in the other, while the sweat rolling from his face mingled in the channels of grease which ran from the corners of his mouth, "Aye, an' ye would see a pretty place, go to old Ireland and take a walk in Lord Farnham's domain. That is the place where ye can see pilsure. Arrah, an' if I were upon that same ground this day I'd fill my body with good ould whisky." "Yes," says the backwoods hunter on my left, as he cast away his bone and smoothed down his long auburn hair with his greasy hand, "Yes, you English and Irish are always talking about your fine countries, but if they are so mighty fine," said he with an oath, "why do so many of you run off and leave them and come to America to get a living?" From this the conversation turned to an argument in which the hunter came off victorious, driving his opponents from the field.

CHAPTER XVI.

Thieving Indians Steal Most of the Horses—A "Whistling" Elk Scares the Tenderfoot Campender.

Aug. 7th—We traveled up the mountain in a southerly direction and fell into a smooth, grassy defile about 200 paces wide which led through between two high peaks of rock. In this place we fell in with a large band of sheep,

killed two ewes, packed the best meat on our horses and proceeded down the defile, which led us on to the head waters of "Stinking" river, about 50 miles from where it enters the plain. We traveled down the stream about 10 miles south and encamped where we saw some signs of Snake Indians who inhabited these wilds. The next morning I arose about daybreak and went in search of our horses which had been turned loose to feed during the night. I soon found all but three, and after hunting some time I discovered a trail made in the dew on the grass where an Indian had been crawling on his belly, and soon found where he had caught the horses. Two of us then mounted mules and followed the trail in a westerly direction up a steep, piney mountain until 10 o'clock when we lost the trail among the rocks and were obliged to give up the pursuit. We then returned to camp and packed our remaining animals and traveled down the stream about 10 miles. 9th—We left the main stream and ascended a small branch in a south southwest direction about eight miles, up a steep ascent, and encamped in a smooth, grassy spot near the head, where we concluded to stop the next day and hunt beaver. Early the next morning a few of the "Mountain Snakes" came to our camp, consisting of three men and five or six women and children. One of them told me he knew the Indians who had stolen our horses; that they lived in the mountains between Stinking river and Clark's Fork, and said that he would go and try to get them. After trading some beaver and sheep skins from them, talking, smoking, etc., about an hour, I mounted my mule with six traps and my rifle and one of my comrades did the same and we started to hunt beaver. We left the camp in a southwest direction and traveled about eight miles over a high, craggy mountain, then descended into a small circular valley about a mile in circumference, which was completely covered with logs, shattered fragments of trees and splinters four or five feet deep. There had been trees two and three feet in diameter broken off within two feet of the ground and shivered into pieces small enough for a kitchen fireplace. This, in all probability, was the effect of an avalanche about two years previous, as the tall pines had been completely cleared for the space of 400 yards wide and more than two miles up the steep side of the mountain. Finding no beaver on the branches of this stream we returned to camp at sunset. Our camp keeper had prepared an excellent supper of grizzly bear meat and mutton, nicely stewed and seasoned with salt and pepper, which, as the mountain phrase goes, is not bad to take upon an empty stomach after a hard day's riding and climbing over mountains and rocks. Aug. 11th—We returned to the river and traveled up about four miles, then left it and traveled up a branch in a due east direction about six miles, killed a couple of fat doe elk and encamped. 12th—Myself and Allen (which was the name of the backwoodsman) started to hunt the small streams in the mountains to the west of us, leaving the Englishman, who was the other trapper, to set traps about the camp. We hunted the branches of

this stream, then crossed the divide to the waters of the Yellowstone lake, where we found the whole country swarming with elk. We killed a fat buck for supper and encamped for the night. The next day Allen shot a grizzly bear and bursted the percussion tube of his rifle, which obliged us to return to our comrades on the 13th and make another tube. The next day we returned to Stinking river and traveled up about 10 miles above where we first struck it. 15th—It rained and snowed all day and we stopped in camp. 16th—Took a northeast course up the mountain and reached the divide about noon, then descended in a direction nearly east and encamped in a valley on the head of Clark's Fork. This valley is a prairie about 30 miles in circumference, completely surrounded by high mountains. The stream after passing southeast falls into a tremendous canyon just wide enough to admit its waters between rocks from 300 to 500 feet perpendicular height, extending about 12 miles to the great plain. 18th—We moved up the stream to the head of the valley and encamped. Here the stream is formed of two forks nearly equal in size. The right hand fork falls into the left from off a bench upwards of 700 feet high, nearly perpendicular. The view of it at the distance of 8 or 10 miles resembles a bank of snow. 19th—Traveled up the left branch about 10 miles northwest through thick pines and fallen timber, then leaving the stream to our right turned into a defile which led us on to the waters of the Yellowstone in about eight miles, where we stopped, set traps for beaver and staid next day. 21st—We traveled down this stream which runs west through a high range of mountains about 25 miles. 22d—Traveled down the stream 15 miles west and encamped in the secluded valley where we staid two days. 25th—Traveled down the valley to the north and crossed a low space about four miles north and fell on to a stream running into the one we had left. Here we set traps and staid until the 2d of September. 3d—Traveled over a high, rugged mountain about 20 miles northwest and encamped in a beautiful valley on a small stream running into the one we had left in the morning. 4th—Traveled 15 miles northwest over a high, piney mountain and encamped on a stream running south into the Yellowstone, where we staid and trapped until the 13th. We then traveled up the stream northeast about eight miles. 14th—Traveled up the stream 12 miles in the same direction. 15th—We crossed the divide of the main range north towards the Big plains. We found the snow belly deep to our horses. After leaving the snow we traveled about eight miles north and encamped on the head branch of the cross creek running north into the Yellowstone about 12 miles below the mouth of "25 Yard" river.

Here a circumstance occurred which furnished the subject for a good joke upon our green Irish camp keeper. The Englishman had stopped on the mountain to hunt sheep, while we descended to the stream and encamped on a prairie about

two miles in circumference. It was the commencement of the rutting season with the elk when the bucks frequently utter a loud cry resembling a shrill whistle, especially when they see anything of a strange appearance. We had made our beds at night on a little bench between two small, dry gullies. The weather was clear and the moon shone brightly. About 10 o'clock at night when I supposed my comrades fast asleep, an elk blew his shrill whistle within about 100 yards of us. I took my gun, slipped silently into the gully and crept toward the place where I heard the sound, but I soon found he had been frightened by the horses and ran off up the mountain. On turning back I met Allen who, hearing the elk, had started to get a shot at him in the same manner I had done without speaking a word. We went back to camp but our camp keeper was no where to be found. We searched the bushes high and low, ever and anon calling for "Conn," but no "Conn" answered. At length Allen, cruising through the brush, tumbled over a pile of rubbish, when lo! Conn was beneath, nearly frightened out of his wits. "Arrah! an' is it you, Allen?" said he trembling as if an ague fit was shaking him. "But I thought the whole world was full of the spalpeens of savages. And where are they gone?" It was near an hour before we could satisfy him of his mistake, and I dare say his slumbers were by no means soft or smooth during the remainder of the night.

CHAPTER XVII.

Main Party Fails to Keep Appointment at "Howell's Encampment"—Stampeded Buffalo.

16th—The Englishman arrived and we traveled down this stream about 10 miles, where we staid the next day as it snowed very hard. 18th—Traveled down about 20 miles and on the 19th came to the plains in about 10 miles travel, where we encamped. Here we found the country filled with buffalo as usual. 20th—We shaped our course northeast and traveled about 25 miles across the spurs of the mountain, fell on to the North Fork of the Rosebud, where we staid the next day as it rained. 22d—We traveled south along the foot of the mountain 20 miles, keeping among the low spurs which project into the plain, in order to prevent being discovered by any straggling parties of Blackfeet which might chance to be lurking about the country. The plains below us were crowded with buffalo which we were careful not to disturb for fear of being discovered. We stopped and set our traps on the small branches of the Rosebud until the 11th of October, then traveled to Rocky Fork and went up it into the mountains and encamped. On the 13th myself and Allen started to hunt Mr. Fontanell's party, leaving our comrades in the mountains to await our return. We traveled down Rocky Fork all day amid crowds of buffalo and encamped

after dark near the mouth. The next morning we went to "Howell's Encampment" but found no tree marked, neither had the earth been disturbed since we had closed it upon the remains of the unfortunate Howell. We now sat down and consulted upon the best course to pursue. As winter was approaching we could not think of stopping in this country where parties of Blackfeet were ranging at all seasons of the year. After a few moments' deliberation we came to the conclusion and I wrote a note, enclosed it in a buffalo horn, buried it at the foot of the tree and then marked the tree with my hatchet. This being done we mounted our mules and started back to the mountains. We traveled about six miles and then stopped and killed a cow. As we were lying within about 60 paces of the band, which contained about 300 cows, Allen made an observation which I shall never forget. Said he, "I have been watching those cows some time and I can see but one that is poor enough to kill, for," said he, "it is a shame to kill one of those large, fat cows merely for two men's suppers." So saying he leveled his rifle on the poorest and brought her down. She was a heifer about three years old and but an inch of fat on the back. After cooking and eating we proceeded on our journey until some time after dark, when we found ourselves on a sudden in the midst of an immense band of buffaloes, which, getting the scent of us, ran helter-skelter around us in every direction, rushing to and fro like the waves of the ocean, approaching sometimes within 10 feet of us. We stood still for we dared not retreat or advance until this stream of brutes took a general course and rolled away with a noise like distant thunder, and then we hurried on through Egyptian darkness a few hundred paces where we found a bunch of willows and concluded to stop for the night rather than risk our lives any further among such a whirlwind of beef. 15th—We reached the camp about 10 o'clock a. m. We staid on Rocky Fork and its branches trapping until the 27th of October, when we concluded to go to a small fork running into Wind river on the east side above the Upper Big Horn mountain, and there pass the winter unless we should hear from the main party. 28th—We traveled to Clark's Fork and the next day to Stinking river, east south-east direction. 30th—We crossed Stinking river and traveled in the same direction over a broken, barren tract of country about 35 miles, whilst the rain poured all day in torrents. About sun an hour high we stopped and the weather cleared up. We encamped for the night in a small ravine where some water was standing in a puddle, but there was no wood save a lone green cottonwood tree which had supported a bald eagle's nest probably more than half a century. 31st—We traveled over ground similar to that of the day before, shaping our course more easterly until night. Nov. 1st—After traveling about 10 miles we reached the Big Horn river and stopped and commenced setting traps. The river at this place was bordered with heavy cottonwood timber with little or no brush beneath.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Threatened and Robbed by the Crow Indians, the Hunters Proceed Afoot to Fort William, Enduring Great Hardship.

Along towards night a party of Crow Indians came to us on foot, armed as if going to war. After smoking and eating they told us they were on their way to the Snakes to steal horses and intended to stay all night with us and leave the next morning. They told us the village to which they belonged was nearly a day's travel below on the river and that Long Hair's village was on Wind river above the mountain, but could give us no information of Mr. Fontanell or his party. They were very insolent and saucy, saying we had no right in their country, and intimated they could take everything from us if they wished. The next morning after eating breakfast they said if we would give them some tobacco and ammunition they would leave us, so we divided our little stock with them. They then persisted in having all, and when we refused, telling them we could not spare it, one of them seized the sack which contained it, while another grasped the Englishman's rifle. We immediately wrenched them out of their hands and told them if they got more they should fight for it. During the scuffle they had all presented their arms, but when we gained possession of the rifle and the sack they put down their arms and told us, with an envious, savage laugh, they were only joking, but we were too well acquainted with the Crows to relish such capers as mere jokes and wished to get out of their power the easiest way possible, as their villages were on either side of us. We then packed up our horses and forded the river and traveled up about six miles and encamped. At the same time the Indians were mounted on our pack horses and riding animals trailing us and the remainder on foot, except one who returned towards the village crying. After we had stopped they made a sort of shelter, as it looked likely for rain, and at night ordered us to go into it and sleep, but we bluntly refused and removed our baggage about 30 paces from them. Sitting down reclining against it, one of them had taken the only blanket I possessed off my riding saddle and put an old worn out coat in its place, with a hint that exchanging was not robbing. They laid down in their shelter and continued to sing their noisy and uncouth war songs until near midnight, when they ceased and all became silent. The night was dark, with a sprinkling of rain. We lay without hearing any disturbance until daybreak when we began to look around, but could find neither Indians nor horses, though we soon found their trail going down the river. We then set about burning our saddles, robes, etc., and caching our beaver in the ground, intending after making a few deposits and bon fires to shoulder our rifles and travel to Fort William at the mouth of Savorney's Fork of the Platte. Our saddles, epishemores, ropes, etc., were scarcely consumed when we saw five or six Indians on horseback coming toward us at full gallop and presently 15 or 20 more appeared following

them. They rode up, alighted from their horses and asked for tobacco to smoke. We gave them some. They formed a circle and sat down. I was not acquainted with any of them except the chief, who was called the "Little Soldier." He spoke to me in the Snake language and said he wished me to smoke with them, but the manner in which they had formed the ring and placed their war weapons excited suspicion and Allen immediately declined as he had lived with the Crows two winters, and said he knew that thieving and treachery were two of the greatest virtues the nation could boast of, and we quickly resolved to leave them at all hazards. So we shouldered our rifles and those who had blankets took them and began to travel. The Indians looked at us with pretended astonishment and asked what was the matter. Allen told them that he was aware that they wanted to rob us and were laying plans to do it without danger to themselves, but, said he, "if you follow or molest us we will besmear the ground with blood and guts of Crow Indians, and do not speak to me more," said he, "for I despise the odious jargon of your nation." So saying he wheeled around and we marched away in a southerly direction toward the mountain. We had not gone far before two of them came after us. We stopped and turned around, when one of them stopped within 300 paces of us, while the other, who was the chief, advanced slowly unarmed. When he came up he addressed me in the Snake language, for knowing the disposition of Allen, he did not wish to trifle with his own life so much as to begin a conversation with him in his own language. Taking me by the hand as he spoke, he said, "My friends, you are very foolish. You do not know how bad my heart feels to think you have been robbed by men belonging to my village; but they are not men, they are dogs who took your animals. The first I knew of your being in this country, about midnight a young man came to the village crying and told me of their intention. I immediately mounted my horse and hastened to your assistance but arrived too late, but if you will go with me I will get your animals and give you some saddles and robes and fit you out as well as I can. You can then stay with me until the blanket chief comes" (the name they gave Mr. Bridger). I interpreted what he had said to my comrades, but they said tell him we will not go to the Crow village; we will not trust our lives among them. When I told him this, he replied, "I am very sorry. What shall I say to the Blanket Chief? How can I hold up my head when I shall meet him, and what shall I do with the things you have left behind?" I told him to give them to the Blanket Chief. He then turned and left us, slowly and sadly, but I am well aware that a Crow Indian can express great sorrow for me and at the same time be laying a plan to rob me or secretly take my life. After he had left us we traveled on toward the mountains about 10 miles, stopped, killed a cow and ate supper, and then traveled until about midnight when, it being dark and cloudy, we stopped and kindled a fire with sage and weeds which

we gathered about us and sat down to wait for daylight. Sleep was far from us. Our minds were so absorbed in the reflections on the past that few were the words that passed among us during the night. A short time after we stopped it commenced snowing very fast and we were obliged to hover over our little fire to keep it from being extinguished. The day at length appeared and we proceeded on our journey toward the mountains, while it still continued to snow. As we began to ascend the mountain the snow grew deeper, and about noon was up to our knees. We traveled on until sun about an hour high, and stopped at some scrubby cedars and willows which grew around a spring. After scraping away the snow we built a fire, broke some cedar boughs, spread them on the ground and laid down, weary and hungry, but we had meat enough with us for supper. Three of us, myself, Allen and Greenberry, had been more or less inured to the hardships of a hunter's life, but our camp keeper, John Conn, could not relish the manner in which he was treated in a country that boasted so much of its freedom and independence, and often wished himself back on the shamrock shore. Myself and Allen had one blanket between us, the others had a blanket each. The wind blew cold and the snow drifted along the brow of the mountains around us. When we arose in the morning our fire had gone out, the snow was three inches deep on our covering and it still kept snowing. Allen killed a black-tailed deer close by and we concluded to stop all day at this place. Nov. 6th—The sun rose clear and we started up the mountain, keeping on the ridges where the wind had driven off the snow, and arrived at the top about 10 o'clock a. m. From this elevation we could see the Wind River plains which were dry and dusty, whilst we were in snow up to the middle. We killed some sheep which were in large numbers about us, cooked some of the best meat over a slow fire, packed it on our backs and proceeded down the mountain south and slept on bare ground that night. Nov. 7th—We arose and found ourselves much refreshed by our night's rest. We traveled nearly east all day, ascending a gradual smooth slope of country which lies between Wind and Powder rivers, and stopped at night on the divide, where we found the snow hard and about two inches deep and the weather cold and windy, whilst not a stick of wood or a drop of water were to be found within 10 miles of us. We found a place washed out by the water in the spring of the year. It was the only shelter to be had, and digging down to the dry earth, scattered some branches of sage upon it to lie upon. I then went in search of a rock in order to heat it and melt snow in my hat, but I could not find so much as a pebble, so we kindled a little fire of sage and sat down with a piece of mutton in one hand and a piece of snow in the other. Eating meat and snow in this manner we made out our supper, and laid down to shake, tremble and suffer with the cold till daylight, when we started and traveled as fast as our wearied limbs would permit in the same direction we had traveled the day before, descending a gradual slope

toward the head of Powder river, until near night, when finding some water standing in a puddle, with large quantities of sage about it, we killed a bull near by, and taking his skin for a bed and some of the best meat for supper, we passed the night very comfortably. We were now in sight of the red buttes on the river Platte, which appeared about 40 miles distant southeast.

The next morning we found the weather foggy, with sleet and snow falling. I tried to persuade my comrades to stop until it should clear away, urging the probability of our steering a wrong course, as we could not see more than 200 paces, but they concluded we could travel by the wind, and after making several objections to traveling by such an uncertain guide to no purpose, I gave up the argument and we started and traveled about east southeast for three hours as we supposed, then stopped a short time and built a fire of sage, while it continued to snow and rain alternately, and seeing no signs of the weather clearing, we started again and went on until near night when, the sun coming out, we found that instead of traveling south southeast our course had been north northeast and we were as far from the Platte as we were in the morning, with the country around us very broken and intersected with deep ravines and gullies. We saw some bulls three or four miles ahead and started for them. After the sun had set it clouded up and began to rain. We reached the bulls about an hour after dark. Allen crawled close to them, shot and killed one, took off the skin and some of the meat, whilst myself and the others were groping around in the dark hunting a few bits of sage and weeds to make a fire, and after repeated unsuccessful exertions we at last kindled a blaze. We had plenty of water under, over and all around us, but could not find a stick for fuel bigger than a man's thumb. We sat down round the fire with each holding a piece of beef over it on a stick with one hand while the other was employed in keeping up the blaze by feeding it with sage and weeds, until the meat was warmed through, when it was devoured, with an observation that "bull meat was dry eating when cooked too much." After supper (if I may be allowed to disgrace the term by applying it to such a wolfish feast) we spread the bull skin down in the mud, in the driest place we could find, and laid down upon it. Our fire was immediately put out by the rain and all was Egyptian darkness. We lay tolerably comfortable while the skin retained its animal warmth and remained above the surface, but the mud being soft, the weight of our bodies sunk it by degrees below the water level which ran under us on the skin. We concluded it was best to lie still and keep the water that was about us warm, for if we stirred we let in the cold water and if we removed our bed we were more likely to find a worse, instead of a better, place, as it rained hard all night. At daylight we arose, bid adieu to our uncomfortable lodgings, and left as fast as our legs would carry us through the mud and water, and after traveling about 12 miles south course, we

stopped, killed a bull, and took breakfast. After eating, we traveled south until sunset. The weather was clear and cold, but we found plenty of dry sage to make a fire and dry weeds for a bed. 11th—The ground was frozen hard in the morning and the wind blew cold from the north. We traveled until about noon, when we fell in with large bands of buffalo, and seeing the red buttes about five or six miles ahead, we killed two fat cows and took as much of the meat as we could conveniently carry and traveled to the Platte, where we arrived about the middle of the afternoon, weary and fatigued. Here we had plenty of wood, water, meat and dry grass to sleep on, and taking everything into consideration, we thought ourselves comfortably situated—comfortably, I say, for mountaineers, not for those who never repose on anything but a bed of down or sit or recline on anything harder than silken cushions, for such would spurn the idea of a hunter talking about comfort and happiness. But experience is the best teacher, hunger good sauce, and I really think to be acquainted with misery contributes to the enjoyment of happiness, and to know one's self greatly facilitates the knowledge of mankind. One thing I often console myself with, and that is, the earth will lie as hard upon the monarch as it will on a hunter, and I have no assurance that it will lie upon me at all. My bones may, in a few years or perhaps days, be bleaching upon the plains in these regions, like many of my occupation, without a friend to turn even a turf upon them after a hungry wolf has finished his feast.

CHAPTER XIX.

Fort William—A Cool Reception—Sioux Sign Language— Three Miles of Deer in One Band.

12th—The sun rose clear and warm and we found ourselves much refreshed by our night's rest. We traveled down the river about five miles, waded across it and stopped the remainder of the day. I had a severe attack of rheumatism in my knees and ankles, but this was no place to be sick, so we jogged along over the Black hills, having plenty of wood, water and fresh buffalo meat every night, until the 18th, when we reached Fort William. When I entered this fort I was met by two of my old messmates, who invited me to their apartments. I now felt myself at home, as Mr. Fontanell was one of the chief proprietors of the establishment, and who had been partly, and I may say wholly, the cause of our misfortunes. At night I lay down, but the pains in my legs and feet drove sleep from me. The next day I walked round the fort as well as I could in order to get my joints limber, and on the third day after our arrival I felt quite recovered and at breakfast I asked my messmates where the man was who had charge of the fort. They replied he was in his house, pointing across the square. I inquired if

he was sick, for I had not seen him. They said he was unwell but not so as to confine him to his room. I observed I must go and see him, as I discovered he was not coming to see me, so saying, myself and Allen started across the square and met him on his way from the storehouse to his dwelling room. We bid him "good morning," which he coldly returned and was on the point of turning carelessly away, when we told him we would like to get some robes for bedding, likewise a shirt or two and some other necessary articles. "Well," said he, "as for blankets, shirts or coats, I have none, and Mr. Fontanell has left no word when there will be any come up." "If that is the case," I replied, "you can let us have some buffalo robes and epishemores." "Yes," said he, "I believe I can let you have an epishemore or two. Here, John, go up into yonder bastion and show these men those epishemores that were put up there some time ago." "I don't think there are any there," replied John, "but some old ones, and them the rats have cut all to pieces." "Oh, I guess you can find some there that will do," he replied, turning around and swinging a key on his thumb as the insignia of his dignified position and with a stiff stride walked to his apartments, while we followed the Major Domo of this elevated quadruped to the bastion where I took the best epishemore I could find, which was composed of nine pieces of buffalo skin sewed together. But necessity compelled me to take it, knowing at the same time there were more than 500 new robes in the warehouse which did not cost a pint of whisky each. But they were for people in the U. S. and not for trappers. This was the 21st day of November, 1837. I never shall forget the time, place nor circumstance, but shall always pity the being who held the imperial sway over a few sticks of wood, with five or six men to guard them. It was not his fault, for how should he depart from the way in which he had been brought up? And what is more, trappers have no right to meet with bad luck, for it is nothing more nor less than the result of bad management. This is the literal reasoning of bandbox and counter-hopping philosophers, consoling the unfortunate by enumerating and multiplying their faults which are always the occasion of their misfortune and so clearly to be seen after the event has occurred. I would rather at any time take an emetic than to be compelled to listen to the advice of such predicting and freakish counsellors. If I must be told of something I already know, let it be that I have learned another lesson by experience and then give me advice for the future. I have often derived a good deal of information from a person who kept silent in the crowd, and it is well known that a certain class of individuals display the most wisdom when they say the least.

On the fourth day after our arrival a large Sioux Indian, arrayed in the costume of the whites, with a sword suspended by his side, entered the lodging where I staid and looked round on the whites for some time without speaking a word. At length he gave me a signal to follow him, and conducted

me to his lodge, which I found had been prepared for the reception of a stranger. The epishemores and robes had been arranged in the back part of the lodge. I was invited to sit by my mute conductor who, being the proprietor, seated himself on my right. The big pipe went round with the usual ceremonies and the necessary forms of Indian etiquette being complied with, mine host commenced asking questions by signs without moving his lips and having acquired the knowledge of conversation by signs without uttering a word. It is impossible for a person not acquainted with the customs of Indians to form a correct idea in what way a continuous conversation is held for hours between two individuals who cannot understand each other's language, but frequent practice renders it faultless and I have often seen two Americans conversing by signs by way of practice. But to return to my story. My inquisitive host gathered in the course of an hour the minute details of my defeat by the Crows, with my tedious journey to the fort, and in return gave me a brief history of his life and intercourse with the whites since he had first seen them, minutely describing the battles he had been in with the Crows, the places where they were fought and their results, particularly the rank of the killed and wounded on both sides. After an hour's dumb conversation a dish of roasted buffalo tongues was set before me, accompanied by a large cake made of dried meat and fruit pounded together, mixed up with buffalo marrow. It is considered an insult by an Indian for a stranger, whether white man or Indian, to return any part of the food which is set before him to eat. If there is more than he wishes to eat at one time he must, to avoid giving offense, take the remainder with him when he leaves the lodge. It is their general custom to set the best victuals their lodge affords before a stranger to eat. On the 22d of November a small trapping party arrived, under the direction of Mr. Thomas Biggs, who intended to remain in the vicinity of the fort until he received further orders from Mr. Fontanell. On alighting from his horse he directed his course to our lodgings. "Well, boys," said he on entering the door, "the Crows found you, did they, and could not let you go without bestowing some of their national favors upon you?" "Yes," I observed, "and we have not mended matters much by coming to this place," and related what had passed between me and the superintendent. "Well," said he, after I had done, "that is too ridiculous. I thought before that Mr. ——— had a soul. But I am glad I have found you here. I will see that you get such articles as you want if they can be had at this place, and you must go with me. I shall go up about 15 miles on the Platte and encamp. I have 200 pounds of lead and powder to shoot it, and about 30 of the company's horses which you well know were left after more than 200 were chosen out of the band to go into the Blackfoot country, and I have not one which has not from one to three of his legs standing awry, but such as they are, you are welcome to them or anything

Wood

there is in the camp, even to the half of tobacco. Nearly all of my men are French and but little company for me, and I want to see you slay the fat cows and eat." So saying, he turned and walked to the apartments of his Wisdom, the overseer. Presently one of the interpreters came and told us that Mr. ——— wished us to come and get our things. "Oh," said Allen, "he has got 'things' has he, and has found out the company is owing us money? He is afraid of getting turned out of his employment by his superior. Well, let us go and get some of his things and yet inform Mr. Fontaneil of his conduct." After getting our things we went to Mr. Biggs' camp as soon as possible. Then I felt a little more independent. The rheumatism had left me and I felt as though I had rather walk than ride a poor horse. This section of country, which was called the "Black Hills," was always celebrated for the game with which it abounded. I passed most of my time hunting black tailed deer among the hills on foot, which has always been my favorite sport. One day as myself and one of my fellow hunters were traveling through the hills, coming toward us, at full speed, was an immense herd of these animals. We stopped and they passed within 80 yards of us without making a halt. We shot the charges that were in our rifles, loaded and shot two more each before they had all passed by. As the hindmost were passing I could see the foremost passing over a ridge covered with snow more than three miles distant, apparently at the same rate they had passed us. They made a trail about 30 paces wide and went in as compact a body as they consistently could. They consisted mostly of females.

CHAPTER XX.

Capt. Fontaneil Arrives With Property Stolen the Month Previous—Leave for Powder River With Supplies.

On the 20th day of December, 1837, Mr. Fontaneil arrived at the camp with 15 men, bringing the furs he had collected during the hunt, for the purpose of depositing them at the fort. He informed us he had left the main party on Powder river and expressed his sorrow that he had been the cause of our misfortune. He had mistaken the day agreed on to meet at Clark's Fork, and sent two men to the place on the 18th of November, who found the note I had left. "But," said he, "I have met with that village of Crows and recovered all your property that could be identified. I told them, when I heard the circumstances, that if they did not produce your property forthwith their heads would pay for it within 24 hours. On hearing this they immediately gave up, as they repeatedly affirmed, all except the beaver skins, which they had traded to a Portuguese by the name of Antonio Montaro, who had built some log cabins on Powder river for the purpose of trading with the Crows." He immediately continued:

"We went to the cabins and asked Mr. Montaro what right he had to trade beaver skins from Indians with white men's names marked upon them, knowing them to be stolen or taken by force from the whites, and asked him to deliver them to me, which he refused to do. I then ordered him to give me the key of his warehouse, which he reluctantly did. I then ordered my clerk to go in and take all the beaver skins he could find with your names marked upon them, and have them carried to my camp, which was done without further ceremony." Here, then was the sum and substance of the sorrows expressed by the Crow chief, whose feelings were so much hurt to think that we were robbed by men, or dogs, belonging to his village, yet I have no doubt if we had gone to the village with him we would have received our things and fared better than we did by the course we pursued. However, we were like all mortals of the present day—destitute of foreknowledge.

On the 28th of January the party started for Powder river with supplies for the main camp, leaving Mr. Fontanell at the fort. The weather being cold, we were compelled to travel on foot most of the time to keep ourselves from freezing. The snow was about 10 inches deep generally, but drifted very much in many places. On the 7th of February we reached the encampment, all in good health, fine spirits, and with full stomachs. Here we found the camp living on the fat of the land. The bottoms along Powder river were crowded with buffaloes, so much so that it was difficult keeping them from among the horses, which were fed upon sweet cottonwood bark, as the buffaloes had consumed everything in the shape of grass along the river.

We passed the remainder of the winter very agreeably until the 25th of March, when the winter began to break, the buffaloes to leave the stream and scatter among the hills and the trappers to prepare for the spring hunt.

CHAPTER XXI.

Spring Hunt—A Trapper's Equipment—Canadian Trapper Has Encounter With Grizzly Bear Without Serious Injury.

After making the usual arrangements, we started on the 29th down Powder river, making short marches, as our animals were very poor. On the 3d of April we left the river and traveled across the country, which was generally comprised of rolling hills, in a northerly direction until the 18th, when we reached the Little Horn river and traveled down it to the forks. This river empties into the Big Horn about 40 miles below the lower mountain. April 21st we left the forks and traveled nearly west over a broken and uneven country, about 18 miles, and encamped on a small spring branch. After we had encamped the trappers made prepara-

tions for starting the next day to hunt beaver as we had set but few traps since we left winter quarters, for the Crows had destroyed nearly all the beaver in the part of the country through which we had been traveling. Early next morning about 30 of us were armed, equipped and mounted, as circumstances required. A trapper's equipment in such cases is generally one animal upon which is placed one or two epishemores, a riding saddle and bridle, a sack containing six beaver traps, a blanket with an extra pair of moccasins, his powder horn and bullet pouch with a belt, to which is attached a butcher knife, a wooden box containing bait for beaver, a tobacco sack with a pipe and implements for making fire, with sometimes a hatchet fastened to the pommel of his saddle. His personal dress is a flannel or cotton shirt (if he is fortunate enough to obtain one, if not antelope skin answers the purpose of over and undershirt), a pair of leather breeches with blanket or smoked buffalo skin leggings, a coat made of blanket or buffalo robe, a hat or cap of wool, buffalo or otter skin, his hose are pieces of blanket wrapped around his feet, which are covered with a pair of moccasins made of dressed deer, elk or buffalo skins, with his long hair falling loosely over his shoulders, completes his uniform. He then mounts and places his rifle before him on his saddle. Such was the dress equipage of the party, myself included, now ready to start. After getting the necessary information from Mr. Bridger concerning the route he intended to take with the camp, we all started in a gallop in a westerly direction and traveled to the Big Horn and there commenced separating by twos and threes in different directions. I crossed the river with the largest party, still keeping a west course, most of the time in a gallop, until sun about an hour high at night, when we killed a bull and each taking some of the meat for supper proceeded on our journey till sunset, when I found myself with only one companion. All had turned to the right or left without once hinting their intentions, for it was not good policy for a trapper to let too many know where he intends to set his traps, particularly if his horse is not as fast as those of his companions. I am sure my remaining companion, who was a Canadian Frenchman, knew not where I intended to set until I stopped my horse at a beaver dam between sunset and dark. We set three traps each and went down the stream half a mile and encamped some time after dark. This day I had traveled about 40 miles with a poor horse, over a rough and broken country, intersected with deep ravines. The next morning we set the remainder of our traps and started down the stream about a mile, where we found two more trappers. We encamped with them, hobbled our horses and turned them out to feed, and before night our numbers had increased to 12 men. The camp came to us on the 26th of April, and found us nearly all together. We raised our traps and moved on with them to the West Fork of Prior's river, where we arrived on the 29th. The next morning we made another start, as formerly. My intentions were to set my traps on Rocky Fork, which we reached

about 3 o'clock p. m., our party having diminished to three men beside myself. In the meanwhile it began to rain and we stopped to approach a band of buffaloes, and as myself and one of my comrades (a Canadian) were walking along, half bent, near some bushes secreting ourselves from the buffaloes, a large grizzly bear, which probably had been awakened from his slumbers by our approach, sprang upon the Canadian, who was five or six feet before me, and placing one fore paw upon his head and the other on his left shoulder, pushed him to one side about 12 feet with as little ceremony as if he had been a cat, still keeping a direct course as though nothing had happened. I called to the Canadian and soon found the fright exceeded the wound, as he had received no injury except what this impudent stranger had done by tearing his coat, but it was hard telling which was the most frightened, the man or the bear. We reached Rocky Fork about sunset and going along the edge of the timber saw another bear lying down with a buffalo calf which he had already killed between his fore paws, while the mother was standing about 20 paces distant moaning very pitifully for the loss of her young. The bear, on seeing us, dropped the calf and took to his heels into the brush. The next day we traveled up Rocky Fork till about 11 o'clock, when I discovered there were trappers ahead of me. I then altered my course, leaving the stream at right angles in a westerly direction, and traveled across the country, parallel with the mountain, in company with a Canadian, for about 10 miles, set my traps on a stream called Bodair's Fork (named after a Canadian who was killed by the Blackfeet in 1836). After setting our traps we traveled down the stream, encamped, and before night our party consisted of 15 men who had set their traps and come to this place to spend the night without any previous arrangement whatever. But an old trapper can form some idea where his companions will encamp, though they seldom tell before their traps are set. I stopped at this place until the 6th of May when, learning that the camp had arrived on Rocky Fork below, I left my traps setting and went to it to get a fresh horse. On the 7th the camp moved near to where my traps were set and the next day moved on to the right hand fork of Rosebud. 9th—I raised my traps and overtook them at the junction of the three forks of the Rosebud. The next day I started with two more to trap the head streams of this river. We traveled up the middle fork to the mountains, where we found signs of four or five trappers being there before us, and to follow a fresh horse track in trapping time is neither wise nor profitable with such a number of trappers as our camp contained. On the 14th we started to the camp, which we found on the Yellowstone at the mouth of the cross creeks. The next day the camp crossed the Yellowstone and moved up the north side to the mouth of "25 Yard" river. There I stopped with the camp till the 19th, when I started again with three others. Traveled up "25 Yard" river about 25 miles in a northerly direction, then left it and took around a low point of mountains in a

westerly direction and fell on to a branch of the same river which forms a half circle from the north point of the mountain from where we first struck the river. We found this part of the country had been recently trapped by the Blackfeet.

The next morning, May 20th, two of my comrades returned to the camp, as it rained very hard. The other asked me which way I was going. I replied, "to hunt beaver," and started off as I spoke. He mounted his horse and followed me without further ceremony. We left the stream and took up the mountain in a southwesterly direction. After traveling about six miles we fell into a defile running through the mountains on to Cherry river, a branch of the Yellowstone. We traveled down this branch until near night and encamped. The next day continued down the stream and reached the plains about 3 o'clock p. m., within about 25 miles of the junction of the three forks of the Missouri. We here left the stream we had descended and took up a small right hand fork of it in an easterly direction, where we remained until the camp arrived on the 25th. 27th—We moved with the camp to the Gallatin Fork the next day. We crossed it with some difficulty but without accident, except the loss of three rifles. The current ran so swift that several horses lost their footing and were washed down the stream, which compelled their riders to abandon both horses and guns and swim ashore. May 29th—Traveled up this stream to the mountain, about 15 miles, and encamped. This valley is the largest in the Rocky Mountains except the valley of the Snake river, but far smoother than the latter and more fertile. May 30th—Traveled up the Gallatin Fork about 10 miles into the mountains and encamped. 31st—We traveled up a small branch in a westerly direction about 25 miles. June 1st—We crossed the mountains in the same direction and encamped in the valley on the Madison Fork which, after leaving the valley, runs through a deep, rocky canyon into the plains below.

CHAPTER XXII.

Battle With the Blackfeet in Which the Trappers Were the Aggressors and Victors.

June 2d—We crossed this fork and traveled up on the west side about 15 miles, on a trail made by a village of Blackfeet which had passed up three or four days previously. They were, to all appearances, occasionally dying of the smallpox, which had made terrible havoc among the Blackfeet during that winter. That day we passed an Indian lodge standing in the prairie near the river, which contained nine dead bodies. 3d—Continued up the stream on their trail until 10 o'clock a. m., when Mr. Bridger, having charge of the camp, tried to avoid them by taking into the mountains, but the majority of the men remonstrated so hard against trying to avoid a village of Blackfeet which did not contain

more than three times our number that he altered his course and turned back toward the Madison and encamped about two miles from the river on a small spring branch. This branch ran through a ridge in a narrow passage of rocks, a hundred feet perpendicular on both sides, about a quarter of a mile from the Madison. The next morning as we were passing over the ridge around this place, we discovered the village about three miles above us on the river. We immediately drove into the canyon with the camp and prepared for battle. Our leader was no military commander, therefore no orders were given. After the company property was secured about 15 men mounted horses and started for the village in order to commence a skirmish. The village was situated on the west bank of the river. About 30 rods behind it arose a bench of land 100 feet high, running parallel with the river and gradually ascending to the westward until it terminated in a high range of mountains about two miles distant. While our men were approaching the village I took a telescope and ascended the highest point of rocks which overhung the camp, to view the maneuvers. They rode within a short distance of the edge of the bench, then dismounted and crept to the edge and opened a fire on the village, which was the first the Indians knew of our being in the country. They fired three or four rounds each before the Indians had time to mount their horses and ascend the bluff 150 yards above them. The whites then mounted their horses and returned towards the camp before about five times their number. A running fire was kept up on both sides until our men reached the camp, when the Indians took possession of an elevated point formed of broken rock, about 300 paces distant on the south side of the camp, from which they kept shooting at intervals for about two hours without doing any damage. Presently one of them called to us in the Flathead tongue and said that we were not men, but women, and had better dress ourselves as such, for we had bantered them to fight and then crept into the rocks like women. An old Iroquois trapper who had been an experienced warrior, trained on the shores of Lake Superior, understanding this harangue, turned to the whites about him and made a speech in imperfect English nearly as follows: "My friends, you see dat Ingun talk? He no talk good, he talk berry bad. He say you, me, all same like squaw. Dat no good. 'Spose you go wid me. I make him no talk dat way." On saying this he stripped himself entirely naked, throwing his powder horn and bullet pouch over his shoulder, and taking his rifle in his hand began to dance and utter the shrill war cry of his nation. Twenty of us who stood around and near him cheered the sound which had been the death warrant of so many whites during the old French war. He started and we followed, amid a shower of balls. The distance, as I said before, was about 300 yards up a smooth and gradual ascent to the rocks where the Blackfeet had secreted themselves to the number of 150. The object of our leader was to make an open charge and drive them from their position, which

we effected without loss, under an incessant storm of fusee balls. When we reached the rocks we stopped to breathe about half a minute, not having as yet discharged a single gun. We then mounted over the piles of granite and attacked them, muzzle to muzzle. Although seven or eight times our number, they retreated from rock to rock like hunted rats among the ruins of an old building, whilst we followed close at their heels, loading and shooting, until we drove them entirely into the plain where their horses were tied. They carried off their dead with the exception of two, and threw them into the river. They placed their wounded on horses and started slowly towards their village with a mournful cry. We then packed our animals and followed them with the camp within a quarter of a mile of the village, where we stopped for the night. During the night they moved the village up about three miles further. Next morning we ascended the bench, intending to pass with the camp by the village. We soon found, however, that they had formed a line of mounted warriors from the river to the thick pines which grew on the mountain. About 30 of us concluded to try the bravery of those cavaliers on the field, leaving the remainder of the camp to bring up the rear. Under cover of the camp we rode into a thicket, out of their sight, and turned into a deep ravine which led us, undiscovered, within 20 or 30 paces of their line. They, in the meantime, were watching the motions of the camp, intending to attack it while crossing the ravine. We approached nearly to the top of the bank, where we concluded to rest our horses a moment and then charge their line in front near the left wing. We were close enough to hear them talking as they pranced back and forth on the bench above us. After tightening our girths and examining our arms, each of us put four or five bullets in our mouths and mounted without noise. Our leader (the same old Iroquois) sallied forth with a horrid yell, and we followed. The Indians were so much surprised with such a sudden attack that they made no resistance whatever, but wheeled and took toward the village as fast as their horses could carry them, whilst we pursued close at their heels until within about 300 yards of their lodges, where we made a halt and stopped until the camp had passed, then rode quietly away to our own party. After leaving them we traveled up the Madison about eight miles and encamped near the place where we had fought the Blackfeet in September, 1835. The Madison, after leaving the mountains, runs westerly to this place, forms a curve and, turning east of north, in which direction it runs, to the junction of the three forks. The next day, June 6th, we left the Madison and traveled south over an undulating plain, about 15 miles, and encamped at Henry lake. This lake is about 30 miles in circumference, surrounded by forests of pine, except on the southeast side, where there is a small prairie about one mile wide and two long, terminating almost to a point at the two extremities. Here we discovered another village of Blackfeet of about 15 lodges who were encamped on our route at the southeast

side of the lake. The next morning we concluded to move camp to the village and smite it, without leaving one to tell their fate, but when within about two miles of the village we met six of them coming to us unarmed, who invited us in the most humble and submissive manner to their village to smoke and trade. This proceeding conquered the bravest in our camp, for we were ashamed to think of fighting a few poor Indians, nearly dwindled to skeletons by the smallpox, and approaching us without arms. We stopped, however, and traded with them for some time and then started on our journey, encamping at night in the edge of the pine woods. June 8th—We commenced our march through the pine woods by the lower track, which runs south nearly parallel with the course of Henry's Fork, and on the 11th we emerged from the pine woods into the plains of Snake river, where we stopped and trapped until the 14th. From thence we went to Pierre's hole, where we found a party of 10 trappers who had left the camp at the mouth of 25 Yard river. They had been defeated by the Blackfeet, lost most of their horses, and one man was wounded in the thigh by a fusee ball.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Routine Experiences Followed by the Regular July (1838) Rendezvous on Green River—Fall Hunt.

June 18th—We left Pierre's Hole and crossed the mountain to Jackson's Big Hole. The next day myself and another trapper left the camp, crossed Lewis Fork and traveled down the valley to the south end. The next day we traveled in a southwest direction over high and rugged spurs of mountain and encamped on a small stream running into Gray's river, which empties into Lewis Fork above the mouth of Salt river. 21st—Traveled down the stream to Gray's river and set traps. We remained hunting the small streams which ran into this river until the 28th of June, then crossed the mountains in a southeast direction and fell on to a stream running into Green river, about 35 miles below the mouth of Horse creek, called Seborges Fork. July 1st—We traveled down this stream to the plains and steered our course northeast towards Horse creek, where we expected to find the rendezvous. The next day we arrived at the place, but instead of finding the camp we found a large band of buffaloes near the appointed place of meeting. We rode up to an old log building which was formerly used as a store house during the rendezvous, where I discovered a piece of paper fastened upon the wall, which informed me that we should find the whites at the forks of Wind river. This was unwelcome news to us as our animals were very much jaded. We then went down Green river, crossed and encamped for the night. The next day we traveled to Little Sandy. 3d—We camped on the point of the mountain on a branch of Sweetwater. 4th—

We encamped at the Oil Spring on Popo-azia, and the next day we arrived at camp. There we found Mr. Dripps from St. Louis, with 20 horse carts loaded with supplies, and again met Captain Stewart, likewise several missionaries with their families on their way to the Columbia river. On the 8th Mr. F. Ermatinger arrived with a small party from the Columbia, accompanied by the Rev. Jason Lee, who was on his way to the U. S. On the 20th of July the meeting broke up and the parties again dispersed for the fall hunt.

I started, with about 30 trappers, up Wind river, expecting the camp to follow in a few days. During our stay at the rendezvous it was rumored among the men that the company intended to bring no more supplies to the Rocky Mountains, and discontinue all further operations. This caused a great deal of discontent among the trappers and numbers left the party. 21st—We traveled up Wind river about 30 miles and encamped. 22d—Continued up the river till noon, then left it to our right, traveled over a high ridge covered with pines, in a westerly direction about 15 miles, and fell on to the Grosvent Fork. Next day we traveled about 20 miles down the Grosvent Fork. 24th—Myself and another crossed the mountain in a northwest direction, fell on to a stream running into Lewis Fork, about 10 miles below Jackson's lake. Here we staid and trapped until the 29th. Then we started back to the Grosvent Fork, where we found the camp, consisting of about 60 men, under the direction of Mr. Dripps, with James Bridger pilot.

The next day the camp followed down the Grosvent Fork to Jackson's Hole. In the meantime myself and comrade returned to our traps, which we raised, and took over the mountain in a southwest direction and overtook the camp on Lewis Fork. The whole company was starving. Fortunately I had killed a deer in crossing the mountain, which made supper for the whole camp. Aug. 1st—We crossed Lewis Fork and encamped and staid the next day. 3d—Camp crossed the mountain to Pierre's Hole and the day following I started with my former comrade to hunt beaver on the streams which ran from the Yellowstone. About the middle of the afternoon, as we were winding down a steep declivity which overhung a precipice of rock nearly 200 feet perpendicular, my horse slipped and fell headlong down and was dashed to pieces. 6th—I returned to camp in Pierre's valley. On the next day made another start with the same comrade. After leaving camp we traveled in a southwest direction across the valley, then took over low hills, covered with pines, until sun about an hour high, when we stopped and set our traps. On the 8th we traveled down the stream about three miles and then ascended a left hand branch in a northeasterly direction. After traveling about 10 miles we fell into a valley surrounded by high mountains, except on the southwest side. This valley was about four miles long and one mile wide, whilst the huge piles of rocks reaching above the clouds seemed almost to overhang the place on

the north and east sides. We stopped here on the 9th and on the 10th returned to hunt the camp. When leaving we took up the valley in a westerly direction and from thence traveled a northwest course through dense forests of pines about 15 miles, when we struck the trail of the camp going north. We followed the track, which still led us through the forest about 12 miles, when we came to a prairie about five miles in circumference in which the camp had stopped the night previous. We stopped here a few minutes, then resumed our journey on the trail and after winding about among the fallen trees and rocks about six miles, we fell on to the middle branch of Henry's Fork, which is called by hunters "The Falling Fork," from the numerous cascades it forms whilst meandering through the forest previous to its junction with the main river. At the place where we struck the fork is one of the most beautiful cascades I have ever seen. The stream is about 60 yards wide and falls over the rocks in a straight line about 30 feet perpendicular. It is very deep and still above where it breaks, and gradually shallows to the depth of three feet on the brink. It is also very deep below and almost dead, except the motion caused by the waters falling into the deep, pond-like stream and boiling from the bottom, rolling off into small riffles and dying away into a calm, smooth surface.

We ascended this stream, passing several beautiful cascades, for about 12 miles, where the trail led us into a prairie seven or eight miles in circumference, in which we found the camp just as the sun was setting.

The next morning, August 11th, we bid adieu to the camp and started on the back track to trap the stream we had left the day previous. However, we took a nearer route and reached the little valley, where we staid until the 25th. This day we had a tremendous thunder storm, which broke in peals against the towering rocks above us with such dreadful clashing that it seemed as if they would have been torn from their foundations and hurled into the valley upon our heads. Such storms are very frequent about these mountains and often pass over without rain.

27th—We left the valley and ascended the mountain southwest and traveled about 15 miles to a branch of Henry's Fork. Here we staid until the 7th of September, and then started down Henry's Fork southwest. After traveling about 12 miles we left the pines and traveled parallel with the stream over rolling ridges among scattered groves of quaking asps, when we arrived at the edge of the plains in traveling about eight miles. Here we discovered a trail made by a war party of Blackfeet, evidently the night previous. We then took a south course and traveled our horses in a trot all day and encamped an hour after dark on Lewis Fork, about 15 miles above the junction. The next day we traveled to Blackfoot creek and the day following to Fort Hall. We

remained at the fort until the 20th and then started down Snake river trapping, with a party of 10 men beside ourselves.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Returned to Fort Hall and Remained in That Vicinity Till January, 1839—Spring Hunt.

22d—We arrived at a stream called Cozzu (or Raft river). This we ascended and hunted until the 5th of October when, finding the country had been recently hunted, we returned to Fort Hall. From thence we started on the 18th with the fort hunter and six men to kill and dry buffalo meat for winter. We cruised about on Snake river and its waters until the 23d of November, when the weather becoming very cold, and snow about 15 inches deep, we returned with our horses loaded with meat to Fort Hall. We stopped here until the 1st of January, 1839, when we began to be tired of dried meat, and concluded to move up the river to where Lewis Fork leaves the mountain and there spend the remainder of the winter, killing and eating mountain sheep.

There were six in the company and we started on the 2d traveling slowly, as the snow was deep and the weather cold, and arrived at the destined place on the 20th of January. We were followed by seven lodges of Snake Indians. We found the snow shallow about the foot of the mountain, with plenty of sheep, elk and some few bulls among the rocks and low spurs.

26th—I, with two white men and several Indians, started through the canyon to hunt elk. After traveling about four miles, I left the party and took up the river on the north side, whilst the remainder crossed the river on the ice to follow the trail of some bulls. I ascended the river, traveling on the ice and land alternately, about four miles further and encamped for the night. This was a severe, cold night, but I was comfortably situated with one blanket and two epishemores and plenty of dry wood to make a fire. When I arose in the morning I discovered a band of elk about half a mile up the mountain. I took my rifle and went to approach them through the snow three feet deep, and when within about 250 paces of them they took the wind of me and ran off, leaving me to return to my encampment with the consolation that this was not the first time the wind had blown away my breakfast. When I arrived at my camp I found plenty of fresh buffalo meat hanging on the bushes near where I had slept. I immediately began to roast and eat, as 24 hours' fasting would naturally dictate. Presently a Snake Indian arrived to whom the meat belonged.

Near where I was encamped was a small stream which ran from a spring about 100 paces distant and emptied into the river. The water was a little more than blood warm.

The beaver had taken advantage of the situation, dammed it up at the mouth and built a large lodge on the bank. At sunrise I discovered three of them swimming and playing in the water.

The next day I killed a bull and returned, through the canyon, to our camp.

On the 30th I started, with my old comrade (Elbridge), back with our traps to try the beaver. The snow was about two feet deep on the level plain and it took us till near night to reach the place. We encamped in a cave at the foot of the mountain near by and I set four traps. The weather was extremely cold, but I felt very comfortable whilst waiking around in the warm water. On coming out and running as fast as I could to the camp, 40 rods distant, both my feet were frozen. I soon drew out the frost, however, by stripping them and holding them in the cold snow. Next morning I found four large, fat beavers in my traps, and on the 2d day of February we returned to camp with 12 beavers.

February 10th—Moved with the camp up the river to where we had caught the beaver and encamped. Lewis Fork comes through this canyon for about 12 miles, where the rock rises 200 or 300 feet, forms a bench and ascends gradually to the mountain, which approaches very close on the north side, and on the south is about three or four miles distant. An occasional ravine running from the mountain to the river through the rocks, on the north side, forms convenient places for encamping, as the bench and low spurs are well clothed with bunch grass. Here we found immense numbers of mountain sheep, which the deep snows had driven down to the low points of rock facing the south near the river. We could see them nearly every morning from our lodges, standing on the points of rock jutting out so high in the air that they appeared no larger than weasels. It is in this position that a hunter delights to approach them from behind and shoot, whilst their eyes are fixed on some object below. It is an exercise which gives vigor, health and appetite to a hunter, to shoulder his rifle at day break and on a clear, cold morning and wind his way up a rugged mountain, over rocks and crags, at length killing a fat old ewe and taking the meat to camp on his back. This kind of exercise gives him an appetite for his breakfast. But hunting sheep is attended with great danger in many places, especially when the rocks are covered with sleet and ice. I have often passed over places where I have had to cut steps in the ice with my butcher knife in which to place my feet, directly over the most frightful precipices, but being excited in the pursuit of game, I would think but little of danger until I had laid down to sleep at night. Then it would make my blood run cold to meditate upon the scenes I had passed through during the day, and often have I resolved never to risk myself again in such places and as often broken the reso-

lution. The sight of danger is less hideous than the thought of it.

On the 18th of March the winter commenced breaking up with a heavy rain, and four of us started up the river to commence the spring hunt, whilst the remainder of the party returned to the fort. After traveling through the canyon we found the ground bare in many places, whilst it still continued to rain. On the 30th of March we traveled to the mouth of Muddy. This we ascended and crossed the mountain with some difficulty, as the snow was very deep, on to the head waters of Gray's creek. There two of our party (who were Canadians) left us and struck off for themselves. Our camp then consisted of myself and my old comrade, Elbridge. I say old comrade because we had been some time together, but he was a young man, from Beverly, Mass., and being bred a sailor, he was not much of a landsman, woodsman or hunter, but a great, easy, good-natured fellow, standing 5 feet 10 inches and weighing 200 pounds.

On the 20th of April we crossed a high ridge in a north direction and encamped on a stream that sinks in the plain soon after leaving the mountain. Here we set our traps for beaver but their dams were nearly all covered with ice, excepting some few holes which they had made for the purpose of obtaining fresh provisions. We stopped on this stream until the 26th of April and then traveled out by the same way which we came.

26th—We traveled in a southerly direction about 25 miles, crossing several of the head branches of Gray's creek. On the 1st of May we traveled about 10 miles east course and the next day went to the head of Gray's marsh, about 20 miles south course. There we deposited the furs we had taken, and the next day started for Salt river to get a supply of salt. We took an easterly direction about six miles and fell on to Gardner's Fork, which we descended to the valley, and on the 6th arrived at the Salt Springs on Scott's Fork of Salt river. Here we found 12 of our old comrades who had come, like ourselves, to gather salt. We staid two nights together at this place, when myself and Elbridge took leave of them and returned to Gray's marsh. From there we started toward Fort Hall, traveling one day and laying by five or six to fatten our horses, and arrived at the fort on the 5th of June.

CHAPTER XXV.

Another Viewpoint of What Is Now Known as the Yellowstone National Park.

This fort now belonged to the British Hudson Bay Company, who obtained it by purchase from Mr. Wyeth, in the year 1837. We stopped at the fort until the 26th of June, then made up a party of four for the purpose of trapping in the Yellowstone and Wind mountains, and arrived at Salt River valley on the 28th. 29th—We crossed the valley northeast, then left it, ascending Gray's river in an easterly direction about four miles, into a narrow, rugged pass, encamped and killed a sheep. 30th—We traveled up this stream 30 miles east and encamped in a small valley and killed a bull, and the next day we encamped in the south end of Jackson's Hole. July 2d—We traveled through the valley north until night, and the next day arrived at Jackson's lake, where we concluded to spend the 4th of July at the outlet.

July 4th—I caught about 20 very fine silver trout which, together with fat mutton, buffalo beef and coffee, and the manner in which it was ground up, constituted a dinner that ought to be considered independent even by Britons.

July 5th—We traveled north parallel with the lake, on the east side, and the next day arrived at the inlet or northern extremity. 7th—We left the lake and followed up Lewis Fork about eight miles in a northeasterly direction and encamped. On the day following we traveled about five miles, when we came to the junction of two equal forks. We took up the left hand on the west side, through the thick pines, and in many places so much fallen timber that we frequently had to make circles of a quarter of a mile to gain a few rods ahead, but our general course was north and I suppose we traveled about 16 miles in that direction. At night we encamped at a lake about 15 miles in circumference, which formed the stream we had ascended. July 9th—We traveled round this lake to the inlet on the west side, and came to another lake about the same size. This had a small prairie on the west side, whilst the other was completely surrounded by thick pines. The next day we traveled along the border of the lake till we came to the northwest extremity, where we found about 50 springs of boiling hot water. We stopped here some hours, as one of my comrades had visited this spot the year previous, and wished to show us some curiosities. The first spring we visited was about 10 feet in diameter, which threw up mud with a noise similar to boiling soap. Close about this were numerous springs similar to it, throwing up mud and water five or six feet high. About 30 or 40 paces from these, along the side of a small ridge, the hot steam rushed forth from holes in the ground, with a hissing noise which could be heard a mile distant. On a near approach we could hear the water bubbling underground, some distance from the surface. The sound of our footsteps

over this place was like thumping over a hollow vessel of immense size. In many places were peaks from two to six feet high formed of limestone which appeared of a snowy whiteness, deposited by the boiling water. The water, when cold, was perfectly sweet, except having a fresh limestone taste. After surveying these natural wonders for some time my comrade conducted me to what he called the "Hour Spring." At that spring the first thing that attracted the attention was a hole about 15 inches in diameter in which the water was boiling slowly about four inches below the surface. At length it began to boil and bubble violently and the water commenced raising and shooting upwards until the column arose to the height of 60 feet, from whence it fell to the ground in drops in a circle about 30 feet in diameter, perfectly cold when it struck the ground. It continued shooting up in this manner five or six minutes and then sank back to its former state of slowly boiling for an hour and then it would shoot forth again as before. My comrade said he had watched the motions of this spring for one whole day and part of the night the year previous and found no irregularity whatever in its movements. After surveying these wonders for a few hours we left the place and traveled north about three miles over ascending ground, then descended a steep and rugged mountain four miles in the same direction and fell on to the head branch of the Jefferson branch of the Missouri. The whole country was still thickly covered with pines except here and there a small prairie. We encamped and set some traps for beaver and staid four days. At this place there was also a large number of hot springs, some of which had formed cones of limestone 20 feet high of a snowy whiteness, which make a splendid appearance standing among the evergreen pines. Some of the lower peaks are very convenient for the hunter in preparing his dinner when hungry, for here his kettle is always ready and boiling. His meat being suspended in the water by a string, is soon prepared for his meal without further trouble. Some of these spiral cones are 20 feet in diameter at the base and not more than 12 inches at the top, the whole being covered with small, irregular semicircular ridges about the size of a man's finger, having the appearance of carving in bas relief formed, I suppose, by the waters running over it for ages unknown. I should think this place to be 3000 feet lower than the springs we left on the mountain. Vast numbers of black tailed deer are found in the vicinity of these springs and seem to be very familiar with hot water and steam, the noise of which seems not to disturb their slumbers, for a buck may be found carelessly sleeping where the noise will exceed that of three or four engines in operation. Standing upon an eminence and superficially viewing these natural monuments, one is half inclined to believe himself in the neighborhood of the ruins of some ancient city, whose temples had been constructed of the whitest marble.

July 15th—We traveled down the stream northwest about 12 miles, passing on our route large numbers of hot springs

with their snow white monuments scattered among the groves of pines. At length we came to a boiling lake about 300 feet in diameter, forming nearly a complete circle as we approached on the south side. The stream which arose from it was of three distinct colors. From the west side for one-third of the diameter it was white, in the middle it was pale red and the remaining third on the east, light sky blue. Whether it was something peculiar in the state of the atmosphere, the day being cloudy, or whether it was some chemical properties contained in the water which produced this phenomenon I am unable to say, and shall leave the explanation to some scientific tourist who may have the curiosity to visit this place at some future period. The water was of deep indigo blue, boiling like an immense cauldron, running over the white rock which had formed around the edges to the height of four or five feet from the surface of the earth, sloping gradually for 60 or 70 feet. What a field of speculation this presented for chemist and geologist.

The next morning we crossed the stream, traveled down the east side about five miles, then ascended another fork in an easterly direction about 10 miles and encamped. From where we left the main fork it runs in a northwest direction about 40 miles before reaching the Burnt Hole. July 17th—We traveled to the head of this branch about 20 miles, east direction. 18th—After traveling in the same direction about seven miles over a low spur of mountains, we came into a large plain on the Yellowstone river, about eight miles below the lake, and followed up the Yellowstone to the outlet of the lake and encamped and set our traps for beaver. We stopped here trapping until the 28th and from thence we traveled to the "Secluded Valley," where we staid one day. From there we traveled east to the head of Clark's Fork, where we stopped and hunted the small branches until the 4th of August, and then returned to the valley. On the 9th we left the valley and traveled two days over the mountains northwest and fell on to a stream running south into the Yellowstone, where we staid until the 16th, and then crossed the mountain, in a northwest direction, over the snow, and fell on to a stream running into the Yellowstone plains and entering that river about 40 miles above the mouth of 25 Yard river. 18th—We descended this stream within about a mile of the plains and set our traps.

The next day my comrades started for the plains to kill some buffalo cows. I remonstrated very hard against them going into the plains and disturbing the buffaloes in such a dangerous part of the country, when we had plenty of fat deer and mutton, but to no purpose. Off they started and returned at night with their animals loaded with cow meat. They told me they had seen where a village of 300 or 400 lodges of Blackfeet had left the Yellowstone in a northwesterly direction but three or four days previous. Aug. 22d—We left this stream and traveled along the foot of the mountains at the edge of the plain, about 20 miles west course,

and encamped at a spring. The next day we crossed the Yellowstone river and traveled up the river on the west side to the mouth of Gardner's Fork, where we staid the next day. 25th—We traveled to "Gardner's Hole," then altered our course southeast, crossing the eastern point of the valley, and encamped on a small branch among the pines. 26th—We encamped on the Yellowstone in the big plain below the lake. The next day we went to the lake and set our traps on a branch running into it, near the outlet on the northeast side.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Wounded by Arrows of Blackfeet—Hair-Raising Experience— Hospitable Reception at Fort Hall.

28th—After visiting my traps I returned to the camp where, after stopping about an hour or two I took my rifle and sauntered down the shore of the lake among the scattered groves of tall pines until tired of walking about (the day being very warm), I took a bath in the lake, probably half an hour and returned to camp about 4 o'clock p. m. Two of my comrades observed, "Let us take a walk among the pines and kill an elk," and started off, whilst the other was lying asleep. Some time after they were gone I went to a bale of dried meat which had been spread in the sun 30 or 40 feet from the place where we slept. Here I pulled off my powder horn and bullet pouch, laid them on a log, drew my butcher knife and began to cut. We were encamped about a half mile from the lake on a stream running into it in a southwest direction, through a prairie bottom about a quarter of a mile wide. On each side of this valley arose a bench of land about 20 feet high, running parallel with the stream and covered with pines. On this bench we were encamped on the southeast side of the stream. The pines immediately behind us were thickly intermingled with logs and fallen trees. After eating a few minutes I arose and kindled a fire, filled my tobacco pipe and sat down to smoke. My comrade, whose name was White, was still sleeping. Presently I cast my eyes toward the horses which were feeding in the valley, and discovered the heads of some Indians who were gliding round under the bench within 30 steps of me. I jumped to my rifle and aroused White. Looking towards my powder horn and bullet pouch, it was already in the hands of an Indian and we were completely surrounded. We cocked our rifles and started through their ranks into the woods, which seemed to be completely filled with Blackfeet, who rent the air with their horrid yells. On presenting our rifles they opened a space about 20 feet wide, through which we plunged. About the fourth jump an arrow struck White on the right hip joint. I hastily told him to pull it out and as I spoke another arrow struck me in the same place, but this did not retard our progress. At length another arrow

struck through my right leg beneath the flesh and above the knee, so that I fell with my breast across a log. The Indian who shot me was within eight feet and made a spring toward me with his uplifted battle axe. I made a leap and dodged the blow and kept hopping from log to log through a shower of arrows which flew around us like hail, lodging in the pines and logs. After we had passed them about 10 paces we wheeled about and took aim at them. They began to dodge behind the trees and shoot their guns. We then ran and hopped about 50 yards further in the logs and bushes and made a stand. I was very faint from the loss of blood and we sat down among the logs, determined to kill the two foremost when they came up and then die like men. We rested our rifles across a log, White aiming at the foremost and myself at the second. I whispered to him that when they turned their eyes toward us to pull trigger. About 20 of them passed by us within 15 feet without casting a glance toward us. Another file came round on the opposite side within 20 or 30 paces, closing with the first a few rods beyond us and all turning to the right the next minute were out of sight among the bushes. They were well armed with fusees, bows and battle axes. We sat still until the rustling among the bushes had died away, then arose and after looking carefully around us White asked in a whisper how far it was to the lake. I replied, pointing to the southeast, about a quarter of a mile. I was nearly fainting from the loss of blood and the want of water. We hobbled along 40 or 50 rods and I was obliged to sit down a few minutes, then go a little further and rest again. We managed in this way until we reached the bank of the lake. Our next object was to obtain some of the water, as the bank was very steep and high. White had been perfectly calm and deliberate until now. His conversation became wild, hurried and despairing. He observed, "I cannot go down to that water for I am wounded all over. I shall die." I told him to sit down while I crawled down and brought some in my hat. This I effected with a great deal of difficulty. We then hobbled along the border of the lake for a mile and a half, when it grew dark and we stopped. We could still hear the shouting of the savages over their booty. We stopped under a large pine near the lake and I told White I could go no further. "Oh," said he, "let us go up into the pines and find a spring." I replied there was no spring within a mile of us, which I knew to be a fact. "Well," said he, "if you stop here I shall make a fire." "Make as much as you please," I replied angrily. "This is a poor time now to undertake to frighten me." I then started to the water, crawling on my hands and one knee and returned in about an hour with some in my hat. While I was at this he had kindled a small fire and taking a draught of water from the hat he exclaimed, "Oh, dear, we shall die here; we shall never get out of these mountains." "Well," said I, "if you persist in thinking so, you will die, but I can crawl from this place upon my hands and one knee and kill two or three elk and make a shelter of the skins, dry the meat, until we get

able to travel." In this manner I persuaded him that we were not in half so bad a situation as we might be, although he was not in half so bad a situation as I expected for, on examining, I found only a slight wound from an arrow on his hip bone. But he was not so much to blame, as he was a young man who had been brought up in Missouri, the pet of the family, and had never done or learned much of anything but horse racing and gambling whilst under the care of his parents (if care it could be called). I pulled off an old piece of a coat made of blanket (as he was entirely without clothing except his hat and shirt), set myself in a leaning position against a tree, ever and anon gathering such branches and rubbish as I could reach without altering the position of my body, to keep up a little fire, and in this manner miserably spent the night. The next morning, August 29th, I could not arise without assistance, when White procured a couple of sticks for crutches, by the help of which I hobbled to a small grove of pines about 60 yards distant. We had scarcely entered the grove when we heard a dog barking and Indians singing and talking. The sound seemed to be approaching us. They at length came near to where we were, to the number of 60. Then they commenced shooting at a large band of elk that was swimming in the lake, killed four of them, dragged them to the shore and butchered them, which occupied about three hours. They then packed the meat in small bundles on their backs and traveled up along the rocky shore about a mile and encamped. We then left our hiding place and crept into the thick pines about 50 yards distant and started in the direction of our encampment in the hope of finding our comrades. My leg was very much swollen and painful, but I managed to get along slowly on my crutches by White carrying my rifle. When we were within about 60 rods of the encampment we discovered the Canadian hunting around among the trees as though he was looking for a trail. We approached him within 30 feet before he saw us, and he was so much agitated by fear that he knew not whether to run or stand still. On being asked where Elbridge was, he said they came to the camp the night before at sunset. The Indians pursued them into the woods, where they separated, and he saw him no more.

At the encampment I found a sack of salt. Everything else the Indians had carried away or cut to pieces. They had built seven large, conical forts near the spot, from which we supposed their numbers to have been 70 or 80, part of whom had returned to their village with the horses and plunder. We left the place, heaping curses on the head of the Blackfoot nation, which neither injured them nor alleviated our distress.

We followed down the shores of the lake and stopped for the night. My companions threw some logs and rubbish together, forming a kind of shelter from the night breeze, but in the night it took fire (the logs being pitch pine) and the blaze ran to the tops of the trees. We removed a short dis-

tance, built another fire and laid by it until morning. We then made a raft of dry poles and crossed the outlet upon it. We then went to a small grove of pines near by and made a fire, where we stopped the remainder of the day in hopes that Elbridge would see our signals and come to us, for we left directions on a tree at the encampment which route we would take. In the meantime the Canadian went to hunt something to eat, but without success. I had bathed my wounds in salt water and made a salve of beaver's oil and castorium which I applied to them. This had eased the pain and drawn out the swelling in a great measure. The next morning I felt very stiff and sore, but we were obliged to travel or starve, as we had eaten nothing since our defeat and game was very scarce on the west side of the lake. Moreover, the Canadian had got such a fright we could not prevail on him to go out of our sight to hunt. So on we trudged slowly, and after getting warm I could bear half my weight on my lame leg, but it was bent considerably and swelled so much that my knee joint was stiff. About 10 o'clock the Canadian killed a couple of small ducks, which served us for breakfast. After eating them we pursued our journey. At 12 o'clock it began to rain, but we still kept on until the sun was two hours high in the evening, when the weather clearing away, we encamped at some hot springs and killed a couple of geese. Whilst we were eating them a deer came swimming along in the lake within about 100 yards of the shore. We fired several shots at him, but the water glancing the balls, he remained unhurt and apparently unalarmed, but still kept swimming to and fro in the lake in front of us for an hour and then started along up close to the shore. The hunter went to watch it in order to kill it when it should come ashore, but as he was lying in wait for the deer a doe elk came to the water to drink and he killed her, the deer being still out in the lake swimming to and fro till dark.

Now we had plenty of meat and drink, but were almost destitute of clothing. I had on a pair of trousers and a cotton shirt which were completely drenched with the rain. We made a sort of shelter from the wind out of pine branches and built a large fire of pitch knots in front of it, so that we were burning on one side and freezing on the other, alternately, all night. The next morning we cut some of the elk meat in thin slices and cooked it slowly over a fire, then packed it in bundles, strung them on our backs and started. By this time I could carry my own rifle and limp along half as fast as a man could walk, but when my foot touched against the logs or brush the pain in my leg was very severe. We left the lake at the hot springs and traveled through the thick pines, over a low ridge of land, through the snow and rain together, but we traveled by the wind about eight miles in a southwest direction, when we came to a lake about 12 miles in circumference, which is the head spring of the right branch of Lewis Fork. Here we found a dry spot near a number of hot springs, under some thick pines. Our hunter

had killed a deer on the way and I took the skin, wrapped it around me and felt prouder of my mantle than a monarch with his imperial robes. This night I slept more than four hours, which was more than I had slept at any one time since I was wounded, and arose the next morning much refreshed. These springs were similar to those on the Madison, and among these, as well as those, sulphur was found in its purity in large quantities on the surface of the ground. We traveled along the shore on the south side about five miles in an easterly direction, fell in with a large band of elk, killed two fat does and took some of the meat. We then left the lake and traveled due south over a rough, broken country, covered with thick pines, for about 12 miles, when we came to the fork again, which ran through a narrow prairie bottom, followed down it about six miles and encamped at the forks. We had passed up the left hand fork on the 9th of July on horseback, in good health and spirits, and down on the right bank on the 31st of August on foot, with weary limbs and sorrowful countenances. We built a fire and laid down to rest, but I could not sleep more than 15 or 20 minutes at a time, the night being so very cold. We had plenty of meat, however, and made moccasins of raw elk hide. The next day we crossed the stream and traveled down near to Jackson's lake on the west side, then took up a small branch in a west direction to the head. We then had the Teton mountain to cross, which looked like a laborious undertaking, as it was steep and the top covered with snow. We arrived at the summit, however, with a great deal of difficulty, before sunset, and after resting a few moments, traveled down about a mile on the other side and stopped for the night. After spending another cold and tedious night, we were descending the mountain through the pines at daylight and the next night reached the forks of Henry's Fork of Snake river. This day was very warm, but the wind blew cold at night. We made a fire and gathered some dry grass to sleep on and then sat down and ate the remainder of our provisions. It was now 90 miles to Fort Hall and we expected to see little or no game on the route, but we determined to travel it in three days. We lay down and shivered with the cold till daylight, then arose and again pursued our journey toward the fork of Snake river, where we arrived sun about an hour high, forded the river which was nearly swimming, and encamped. The weather being very cold, and fording the river so late at night, caused me much suffering during the night. Sept. 4th—We were on our way at daybreak and traveled all day through the high sage and sand down Snake river. We stopped at dark, nearly worn out with fatigue, hunger, and want of sleep, as we had now traveled 65 miles in two days, without eating. We sat and hovered over a small fire until another day appeared, then set out as usual and traveled to within about 10 miles of the fort, when I was seized with a cramp in my wounded leg, which compelled me to stop and sit down every 30 or 40 rods. At length we discovered a halfbreed encamped in the valley,

who furnished us with horses and went with us to the fort, where we arrived about sun an hour high, being naked, hungry, wounded, sleepy and fatigued. Here again I entered a trading post after being defeated by the Indians, but the treatment was quite different from that which I had received at Savorney's Fork in 1837, when I had been defeated by the Crows.

The fort was in charge of Mr. Courtney M. Walker, who had been lately employed by the Hudson Bay Company for that purpose. He invited us into a room and ordered supper to be prepared immediately. Likewise such articles of clothing and blankets as we called for. After dressing ourselves and giving a brief history of our defeat and sufferings, supper was brought in, consisting of tea, cakes, buttermilk, dried meat, etc. I ate very sparingly, as I had been three days fasting, but drank so much strong tea that it kept me awake till after midnight. I continued to bathe my leg in warm salt water and applied a salve, which healed it in a very short time, so that in 10 days I was again setting traps for beaver. On the 13th of September Elbridge arrived safe at the fort. He had wandered about among the mountains several days without having any correct knowledge, but at length accidentally falling on to the trail which we had made in the summer, it enabled him to reach the plains and from there he had traveled to the fort by his own knowledge.

On the 20th of October we started to hunt buffalo and make meat for the winter. The party consisted of 15 men. We traveled to the head of the Jefferson Fork of the Missouri, where we killed and dried our meat. From there we proceeded over the mountain through Camas prairie to the forks of Snake river, where most of the party concluded to spend the winter. Four of us, however, who were the only Americans in the party, returned to Fort Hall on the 10th of December. We encamped near the fort and turned our horses among the springs and timber to hunt their living during the winter, whilst ourselves were snugly arranged in our skin lodge, which was pitched among the large cottonwood trees, and in it provisions to serve us till the month of April. There were four of us in the mess. One was from Missouri, one from Massachusetts, one from Vermont and myself from Maine. We passed an agreeable winter. We had nothing to do but to eat, attend to the horses and procure firewood. We had some few books to read, such as Byron, Shakespeare and Scott's works, the Bible and Clark's Commentary on it, and other small works on geology, chemistry and philosophy. The winter was very mild and the ground was bare in the valley until the 15th of January, when the snow fell about eight inches deep, but disappeared again in a few days. This was the deepest snow and of the longest duration of any we had during the winter.

CHAPTER XXVII.

**Old Partners "Split Blankets"—Supply Train Reaches Fort
Hall June 14, 1840.**

On the 10th of March I started again with my old companion Elbridge. We traveled from the fort on the Blackfoot near the foot of the mountain, where we set some traps for beaver, the ice being broken up. On the 15th we tried to cross the mountain to Gray's valley, but were compelled to turn back, for the snow. On the 20th made another trial and succeeded, and encamped at the forks of Gray's creek. Here the ground was bare along the stream and on the south sides of the hills, but very deep on the high plains. I killed two bulls, which came in good time, after living on dried meat all winter. March 19th—We traveled up Gray's creek about 10 miles. There we found the snow very deep and hard enough to bear our horses in the morning. On the 22d we traveled on the snow up this stream about five miles and encamped on a bare spot of ground, where we staid three days, then started on the snow, as usual, and went about eight miles to the valley about Gray's marsh, where we found a bare spot about 40 rods square on the south side of a ridge, and encamped. The snow in the valley was about three feet deep on a level. March 28th we started on foot in the morning on the snow to hunt buffalo. After going about two miles we found 11 bulls, approached and killed 10 of them on the spot. We then butchered some of them and took out the tongues of the others, buried the meat about three feet deep in a snow drift, laid some stones on the snow over it and burned gun powder upon them to keep away the wolves. We then took meat enough for our suppers and started for the camp. By this time the snow was thawed so much that we broke through nearly every step. Early next morning, the snow being frozen, we took two horses and went for our meat, but when we reached the place where we had buried it we found the wolves had dug it up and taken the best of it, notwithstanding our precautions. The carcasses of the bulls yet remained untouched by them, and from these we loaded our horses and returned to camp. About noon the rays of the sun shining upon the snow and reflecting upward began to affect our eyes, insomuch that toward night we could scarcely look abroad. We lay down to sleep, but it was useless, for our eyes felt as if they were filled with coarse sand. After four days of severe suffering with what the trappers call snow blindness, we began to recover our eyesight by degrees, although we had not been at any time totally blind, yet we had been the whole time very near it. We staid here until the 10th of April when, finding the snow did not abate, we returned to the forks of Gray's creek, where we remained until the 20th. We then traveled to the fork which sinks in the plain, on Lewis Fork, where we set our traps and staid until the 1st of May. On the 2d we arrived again at the marsh on Gray's creek, where we found the

ground mostly bare but the streams overflowing their banks. On the 5th we crossed the mountain in an easterly direction, fell on to a stream running into Lewis Fork 10 miles below the mouth of Salt river. We traveled down this stream, which runs through a narrow cut in the mountains for about 15 miles and then forms a small valley, where we stopped and set our traps and staid until the 20th, when Elbridge observed he thought we had better leave our traps setting, turn and go to Salt river valley, spend a few days killing buffalo, and then return. I remonstrated against the proposal as our horses were very poor, the streams high and the ground very muddy, but I told him if he wished to go to take his traps with him and not be at the trouble of coming back after them. The next morning he packed his horses and left me. My two horses were now my only companions, with the exception of some books which I brought from the fort. I staid here trapping until the 28th. Then traveled up a branch about 15 miles, crossed the mountain in a northwest direction, fell on to the head of Muddy creek where I killed a bull and stopped for the night. The next day I stopped at this place and dried some meat. 30th—Went on the Right Fork of Muddy and set some traps. Here I staid six days and then went to Gray's marsh, intending to kill and dry some meat and go to the fort, but finding no buffalo here, I crossed on to Salt river and finding no buffalo there I ascended Gardner's Fork, crossed the mountain and fell on to Black-foot creek, where I killed a fat bull, dried the meat and started for Fort Hall, where I arrived on the 10th of June.

June 14th Mr. Ermatinger arrived at the fort with 80 horse loads of goods to supply the post the ensuing year. On the 15th Elbridge arrived, having fallen in with a party of hunters soon after leaving me in the mountains, after having lost his traps in crossing Gray's river. A few days after he arrived he expressed a wish that I would go with him and two others to make a hunt in the Yellowstone mountains. I replied I had seen enough of the Yellowstone mountains and, moreover, I intended to trap in future with a party who would not leave me in a pinch.

On the 22d of June I started with two horses, six traps and some few books, intending to hunt on the waters of Snake river in the vicinity of Fort Hall. I went to Gray's Hole, set my traps and staid five days. From there I went on to Milk Fork, where I staid until the 15th of July. From there I took a northerly direction through the mountains and fell on to a stream running into Lewis Fork near the mouth of Salt river, where I staid 12 days and then returned to Gray's marsh and staid until the 3d of August. I then traveled through the mountains, southeast, on to the head stream of Gardner's Fork, where I spent the time hunting the small branches until the 15th. From there I started toward the fort, hunting the streams which were on the route, and arrived on the 22d.

After stopping here a few days I started, in company with three trappers, one of whom was Major Meek, and traveled to the forks of Snake river. From there we ascended Henry's Fork about 15 miles and then took up a stream in a southwest direction into the mountains, but finding no beaver, we crossed the mountain and struck Lewis Fork in the canyon where, after trapping some days, we went on to Gray's creek, where, after staying seven days, we killed a fat grizzly bear and some antelope, loaded the meat on our horses and started to the fort, where we arrived on the 22d of September.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A Winter With the Indians Near Great Salt Lake—Christmas Dinner a l'Indian.

On the 1st of October I again left the fort with a Frenchman who had an Indian wife and two children, and was going on to Green river to pass the winter with them. We traveled up Portneuf about 15 miles, where we stopped the next day and hunted antelope, and the day following we traveled up the stream about 20 miles when, after staying 10 days, we went to the Soda Springs on Bear river. Here we concluded to spend a month on Bear river, traveling slowly, hunting beaver and antelope, as the latter is the only game in this part of the country. Beaver also were getting very scarce. On the 15th of November the snow began to fall and my comrade started, with his family, across the mountains to Green river and I returned towards the fort. On my way down Bear river I met thousands of antelope traveling towards their winter quarters, which is generally Green river valley. I followed Bear river down to Cache valley, where I found 20 lodges of Snake Indians, and staid with them several days. They had a considerable number of beaver skins, but I had nothing to trade for them. They told me if I would go to the fort and get some goods, return and spend the winter with them, they would trade their furs with me. I started for the fort with one of them whom I engaged to assist me with my horses. I arrived at the fort on the 23d of November, when, after getting such articles for trade as I wished, and my personal supplies for the winter, I returned to Cache valley, accompanied by a halfbreed. On arriving at the village I found several Frenchmen and halfbreed trappers encamped with the Snakes. One Frenchman, having an Indian wife and child, invited me to pass the winter in his lodge, and as he had a small family and large lodge, I accepted the invitation and had my baggage taken into his lodge and neatly arranged by his wife, who was a Flathead. The neat manner in which her lodge and furniture was kept would have done honor to a large portion of the "pale faced" fair sex in the civilized world.

We staid in this valley until the 15th of December, when it was unanimously agreed to go to the Salt lake and there

spend the remainder of the winter. The next day we traveled across the valley in a southwest direction, then took into a narrow defile which led us through the mountain into the valley on the eastern borders of the lake. The day following we moved along the valley in a southerly direction and encamped on a small branch close to the foot of the mountain. The ground was still bare and the autumnal growth of grass was the best I ever saw at this season of the year.

18th—I arose about an hour before daylight, took my rifle and ascended the mountain on foot to hunt sheep. The weather was clear and cold but the mountain being steep and rugged and my rifle heavy, the exercise soon put me in a perspiration. After climbing about half a mile I sat down on a rock to wait for daylight and when it came I discovered a band of about 100 rams within about 80 yards of me. I shot and killed one. The others ran about 50 yards further and stopped. While I was reloading my rifle one of them ascended a high pinnacle of rock which jutted over a precipice. There were others nearer to me, but I wished to fetch this proud animal from his elevated position. I brought my rifle to my face, the ball whistled through his heart and he fell headlong over the precipice. I followed the band at some distance among the crags and killed two more, butchered them, then returned and butchered the two I had first killed, and returned to camp and sent some men with horses to get the meat.

Dec. 20th—We moved along the borders of the lake about 10 miles and encamped on a considerable stream running into it called Weaver's river. At this place the valley is about 10 miles wide, intersected with numerous springs of salt and fresh hot and cold water, which rise at the foot of the mountain and run through the valley into the river and lake. Weaver's river is well timbered along its banks, principally with cottonwood and box elder. There are also large groves of sugar maple, pine and some oak growing in the ravines about the mountain. We also found large numbers of elk which had left the mountains to winter among the thickets of wood and brush along the river.

Christmas.

December 25th—It was agreed on by the party to prepare a Christmas dinner, but I shall first endeavor to describe the party and then the dinner. I have already said the man who was the proprietor of the lodge in which I staid was a Frenchman with a Flathead wife and one child. The inmates of the next lodge was a halfbreed Iowa, a Nez Perce wife and two children, his wife's brother and another halfbreed; next lodge was a halfbreed Cree, his wife (a Nez Perce) two children and a Snake Indian. The inmates of the third lodge was a halfbreed Snake, his wife (a Nez Perce) and two children. The remainder were 15 lodges of Snake Indians. Three of the party spoke English but very broken, therefore

that language was made but little use of, as I was familiar with the Canadian French and Indian tongue.

About 10 o'clock we sat down to dinner in the lodge where I staid, which was the most spacious, being about 36 feet in circumference at the base, with a fire built in the center. Around this sat on clean epishemores all who claimed kin to the white man (or to use their own expression, all that were gens d'esprit), with their legs crossed in true Turkish style, and now for the dinner.

The first dish that came on was a large tin pan 18 inches in diameter, rounding full of stewed elk meat. The next dish was similar to the first, heaped up with boiled deer meat (or as the whites would call it, venison, a term not used in the mountains). The third and fourth dishes were equal in size to the first, containing a boiled flour pudding, prepared with dried fruit, accompanied by four quarts of sauce made of the juice of sour berries and sugar. Then came the cakes, followed by about six gallons of strong coffee ready sweetened, with tin cups and pans to drink out of, large chips or pieces of bark supplying the places of plates. On being ready, the butcher knives were drawn and the eating commenced at the word given by the landlady. As all dinners are accompanied with conversation, this was not deficient in that respect. The principal topic which was discussed was the political affairs of the Rocky Mountains, the state of governments among the different tribes, the personal characters of the most distinguished warrior chiefs, etc. One remarked that the Snake chief, Pahda-hewakunda was becoming very unpopular and it was the opinion of the Snakes in general that Moh-woom-hah, his brother, would be at the head of affairs before 12 months, as his village already amounted to more than 300 lodges and, moreover, he was supported by the bravest men in the nation, among whom were Ink-a-tosh-a-pop, Fibe-bo-un-to-wat-see and Who-sha-kik who were the pillars of the nation and at whose names the Blackfeet quaked with fear. In like manner were the characters of the principal chiefs of the Bannock, Nez Perce, Flathead and Crow nations and the policy of their respective governments commented upon by the descendants of Shem and Japhet with as much affected dignity as if they could have read their own names when written, or distinguish the letter B from a bull's foot.

Dinner being over, the tobacco pipes were filled and lighted, while the squaws and children cleared away the remains of the feast to one side of the lodge, where they held a sociable tete-a-tete over the fragments. After the pipes were extinguished all agreed to have a frolic shooting at a mark, which occupied the remainder of the day.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Solitary Hunting Bouts Early Spring of 1841, Near the Great Salt Lake.

January 1st—The ground was still bare but the weather cold and the fresh water streams shut up with ice. On the 3d we moved camp up the stream to the foot of the mountain, where the stream forked. The right was called Weaver's Fork and the left Ogden's, both coming through the mountain in a deep, narrow cut. The mountain was very high, steep and rugged. Rising abruptly from the plain about the foot of it were small rolling hills abounding with springs of fresh water. The land bordering on the river and along the stream was a rich, black, alluvial deposit, but the high land was gravelly and covered with wild sage, with here and there a grove of scrubby oaks and red cedars.

On the 10th I started to hunt elk by myself, intending to stop out two or three nights. I traveled up Weaver's Fork in a southeasterly direction through the mountains. The route was very difficult and in many places hard traveling over high points of rocks and around high precipices, on a trail just wide enough for a single horse to walk. In about 10 miles I came into a small plain five or six miles in circumference, just as the sun was setting. Here I stopped for the night. The snow being about five inches deep and the weather cold, I made a large fire. As I had not killed any game during the day I had no supper at night, but I had a blanket, horse to ride and a good rifle with plenty of ammunition and I was not in much danger of suffering by hunger, cold or fatigue, so I wrapped myself in my blanket and laid down on some dry grass I had collected before the fire. About an hour after dark it clouded up and began to snow, but as I was under some large trees it did not trouble me much and I soon fell asleep. At daylight it was still snowing very fast and about eight inches had fallen during the night. I saddled my horse and started in a northerly direction over high, rolling hills, covered with scrubby oaks, quaking asps and maples, for about 10 miles, where I came into a smooth valley about 20 miles in circumference, called "Ogden's Hole," with the fork of the same name running through it. Here the snow was about 15 inches deep on a level. Towards night the weather cleared up and I discovered a band of about 100 elk on the hill among the shrubbery. I approached and killed a very fat old doe, which I butchered and packed the meat and skin on my horse to an open spring about a quarter of a mile distant, where I found plenty of dry wood and where I stopped for the night. I had now a good appetite for supper. After eating I scraped away the snow on one side of the fire, spread down the raw elk hide and laid down, covering myself with my blanket. In the morning when I awoke it was still snowing, and after eating breakfast I packed the meat on my horse and started on foot,

leading him by the bridle. Knowing it was impossible to follow down this stream to the plains with a horse, I kept along the foot of the mountain in a northerly direction for about two miles, then turning to the left into a steep ravine began to ascend, winding my way up through the snow, which grew deeper as I ascended. I reached the summit in about three hours. In many places I was obliged to break a trail for my horse. I descended the mountain west to the plains with comparative ease and reached the camp about dark. On arriving at the lodge I entered and sat down before a large, blazing fire. My landlady soon unloaded my horse and turned him loose and then prepared supper, with a good dish of coffee, whilst I, as a matter of course, related the particulars of the hunt. We staid at this place during the remainder of January. The weather was very cold and the snow about 12 inches deep, but I passed the time agreeably hunting elk among the timber in fair weather and amusing myself with books in foul.

The 2d day of February I took a trip up the mountain to hunt sheep. I ascended a spur with my horse, sometimes riding and then walking, until near the top, where I found a level bench where the wind had blown the snow off. I fastened my horse with a long cord and took along the side of the mountain among the broken crags to see what the chances were for supper. I had not rambled far when, just as the sun was sinking below the dark green waters of the Salt lake, I discovered three rams about 300 feet perpendicular below me. I shot and killed one of them, but it being so late and the precipice so bad, I concluded to sleep without supper rather than to go after it. I returned to my horse and built a large fire with fragments of dry sugar maple which I found scattered about on the mountain, having for a shelter from the wind a huge piece of coarse sandstone, of which the mountain was composed. The air was calm, serene and cold and the stars shone with an uncommon brightness. After sleeping till midnight I arose and renewed the fire. My horse was continually walking backward and forward to keep from freezing. I was upwards of 6000 feet above the level of the lake. Below me was a dark abyss, silent as the night of death. I sat and smoked my pipe for about an hour and then laid down and slept until near daylight. My chief object in sleeping at this place was to take a view of the lake when the sun rose in the morning. This range of mountains laid nearly north and south and approached the lake irregularly within from 3 to 10 miles. About eight miles from the south-east shore stood an island about 25 miles long and six wide, having the appearance of a low mountain extending north and south and rising 300 or 400 feet above the water. To the north of this about eight miles rose another island, apparently half the size of the first. North of these about six miles and about half way between rose another about six miles in circumference, which appeared to be a mass of basaltic rock with a few scrubby cedars standing about in the cliffs. The others appeared to be clothed with grass and

wild sage, but no wood except a few bushes. Near the western horizon arose a small white peak just appearing above the water, which I supposed to be the mountain near the west shore. On the north side a high promontory about six miles wide and 10 miles long projected into the lake, covered with grass and scattered cedars. On the south shore rose a vast pile of huge, rough mountains, which I could faintly discern through the dense atmosphere. The water of the lake was too much impregnated with salt to freeze any, even about the shores. About sun an hour high I commenced hunting among the rocks in search of sheep, but did not get a chance to shoot at any till the middle of the afternoon when, crawling cautiously over some shelving cliffs, I discovered 10 or 12 ewes feeding some distance below me. I shot and wounded one, reloaded my rifle and crept down to the place I last saw her, when I discovered two standing on the side of a precipice. I shot one through the head and she fell dead on the cliff where she had been standing. I then went above and fastened a cord (which I carried for the purpose) to some bushes which overhung the rock. By this means I descended and rolled her off the cliff where she had caught, and her body fell upwards of 100 feet. I then pulled myself up by the cord and went around the rock down to where she fell, butchered her, hung the meat on a tree, then pursued and killed the other. After butchering the last, I took some of the meat for my supper and started up the mountain and arrived at the place where I had slept about an hour after dark. I soon had a fire blazing and a side of ribs roasting, and procured water by heating stones and melting snow in a piece of skin. By the time supper was over it was late in the night, and I lay down and slept till morning. At sunrise I started on foot to get my meat, and left my rifle about half way down the mountain. When I came to where the first sheep had been hung in a tree I discovered a large wolverine sitting at the foot of it. I then regretted leaving my rifle, but it was too late, he saw me and took to his heels as well he might, for he had left nothing behind worth stopping for. All the traces of the sheep I could find were some tufts of hair scattered about on the snow. I hunted around for some time but to no purpose. In the meantime the cautious thief was sitting on the snow at some distance, watching my movements as if he was confident I had no gun and could not find his meat, and wished to aggravate me by his antics. He had made roads in every direction from the root of the tree, dug holes in the snow in a hundred places apparently to deceive me. I soon got over my ill humor and gave up that a wolverine had fooled a Yankee.

I went to the other sheep and found all safe; carried the meat to my horse, mounted and went to camp.

February 15th—The weather began to moderate and rain and on the 23d the ground was bare about the mountain.

CHAPTER XXX.

A Visit to the Eutaw Indian Village—Cordial Treatment at Their Hands.

February 24th—I left the camp with a determination to go to the Eutaw village at the southeast extremity of the lake to trade furs. I traveled along the foot of the mountain about 10 miles, when I stopped and deposited in the ground such articles as I did not wish to take with me. The next day I traveled along the foot of the mountain south, about 30 miles, and encamped on a small spring branch which ran a distance of four miles from the mountain to the lake. This was a beautiful and fertile valley, intersected by large numbers of fine springs which flowed from the mountain to the lake and could, with little labor and expense, be made to irrigate the whole valley. The following day I traveled about 15 miles along the lake, where a valley opened to my view, stretching to the southeast about 40 miles and upward of 15 miles wide. At the further extremity of this valley laid Trinpannah or Eutaw lake, composed of fresh water, about 60 miles in circumference. The outlet of it was a stream about 30 yards wide which, after cutting this valley through the middle, emptied into the Salt lake. I left the lake and traveled up this valley over smooth ground which the snow had long since deserted and the green grass and herbage were fast supplying its place. After crossing several small streams which intersected this vale, I arrived at the village, rode up to a lodge and asked of a young Indian who met me where Want-a-Sheep's lodge was; but before he could reply a tall Indian, very dark complected, with a thin visage and a keen, piercing eye, having his buffalo robe thrown carelessly over his left shoulder, gathered in folds around his waist and loosely held by his left hand, stepped forth and answered in the Snake tongue, "I am Want-a-Sheep, follow me," at the same time turning round and directing his course to a large, white lodge. I rode to the door, dismounted and followed him in. He immediately ordered my horses to be unsaddled and turned loose to feed, whilst their loads were carefully arranged in the lodge. After the big pipe had gone around several times in silence he began the conversation. I was asked the news, where traveling, for what, whom and how. I replied to these several inquiries in the Snake tongue, which was understood by all in the lodge. He then gave me an extract of all he had seen, heard and done for 10 years past. He had two sons and one daughter grown to man and womanhood and the same number of less size. His oldest son was married to a Snake squaw and his daughter to a man of the same nation. The others yet remained single. After supper was over the females retired from the lodge and the principal men assembled to smoke and hear the news, which occupied the time till near midnight, when the assembly broke up, the men retiring to their respective lodges and the women returned. I passed the time as pleasantly

at this place as ever I did among Indians. In the daytime I rode about the valley hunting wild fowl, which, at this season of the year, rend the air with their cries during the night. The old chief would amuse me with traditional tales mixed with the grossest superstition, some of which were not unlike the manners of ancient Israelites. There seems to be happiness in ignorance which knowledge and science destroys. Here was a nation of people contented and happy. They had fine horses and lodges and were very partial to the rifles of the white man. If a Eutaw had 8 or 10 good horses, a rifle and ammunition he was contented. If he brought a deer at night from the hunt, joy beamed in the faces of his wife and children and if he returned empty a frown was not seen on the countenance of his companions. The buffalo had long since left the shores of these lakes and the hostile Blackfeet had not left a footprint here for many years.

During my stay with these Indians I tried to gain some information respecting the southern extremity of the Salt lake, but all that I could learn was that it was a sterile, barren, mountainous country, inhabited by a race of depraved and hostile savages who poisoned their arrows and hindered the exploring of the country.

The chief's son informed me he had come from the largest island in the lake a few days previous, having passed the winter upon it with his family, which he had conveyed back and forth on a raft of buirushes about 12 feet square. He said there were large numbers of antelope on the island and as there was no wood he had used wild sage for fuel. The old chief told me he could recollect the time when the buffalo passed from the mainland to the island without swimming, and that the depth of the waters was yearly increasing. After obtaining all the furs I could from the Eutaws, I started toward Fort Hall on the 27th of March and traveled along the borders of the lake about 25 miles. The fire had run over this part of the country the previous autumn and consumed the dry grass. The new had sprung up to the height of six inches, intermingled with various kinds of flowers in full bloom. The shores of the lake were swarming with water fowl of every species that inhabit inland lakes.

CHAPTER XXXI.

**Back to Fort Hall—Escorted Missionary to Green River and
Back—Partners Re-unite.**

The next day I went on to Weaver's river. April 1st I left Weaver's river and traveled along to the northeast extremity of the lake, about 25 miles. The next day I went on to Bear river and struck it about 15 miles below Cache valley and 12 miles from the mouth. There I found my winter comrades and staid one night and then pursued my journey toward Fort Hall, where I arrived on the 7th of April.

I hunted beaver around the country near the fort until the 15th of June, when the party arrived from the Columbia river, accompanied by a Presbyterian missionary with his wife and one child, on their way to the States. I left the fort with them and conducted them to Green river, where we arrived on the 5th of July. On learning that no party was going to the States they concluded to return to the Columbia river and we retraced our steps to Fort Hall, where we arrived on the 8th day of August.

I remained at the fort until the 15th of September, and then started with Elbridge and my old comrade from Vermont to hunt a few more beaver. We went to the headwaters of Blackfoot, where we staid 10 days and then crossed the mountain in a southwest direction on to Bear river, which we struck about 25 miles below the Snake lake. We continued hunting beaver and antelope between this place and the Soda Springs until the 10th of October. We then traveled down Bear river to Cache valley, where we stopped until the 21st, then we followed down the river near where it empties into the Salt lake. Along the bank of this stream for about 10 miles from the lake extends a barren, clay flat, destitute of vegetation excepting a few willows along the bank of the river and scattering spots of salt grass and sage. In one place there was about four or five acres covered about four inches deep with the most beautiful salt I have ever seen. Two crusts had formed, one at the bottom and the other on the top, which had protected it from being the least soiled. Between those crusts the salt was completely dry, loose and composed of very small grains of a snowy whiteness.

We stopped about this place until the 5th of November and then returned to Fort Hall where, after remaining a few days, we concluded to go on to the head streams of Portneuf and stop until the waters froze up. We traveled up about 40 miles and arranged an encampment in a beautiful valley, as the weather began to grow cold.

In the year 1836 large bands of buffalo could be seen in almost every little valley on the small branches of this stream. At this time the only traces of them which could be seen were the scattered bones of those which had been killed. Their deeply indented trails which had been made in former

years were overgrown with grass and weeds. The trappers often remarked to each other as they rode over these lonely plains that it was time for the white man to leave the mountains, as beaver and game had nearly disappeared.

On the 15th of November I started up a high mountain in search of sheep. After hunting and scrambling over the rocks for half a day without seeing any traces of I sat down upon a rock which overlooked the country below me. At length, casting a glance along the south side of the mountain, I discovered a large grizzly bear sitting at the mouth of his den. I approached within about 180 paces, shot and missed him. He looked around and crept slowly into his den. I reloaded my rifle, went up to the hole and threw down a stone weighing five or six pounds, which soon rattled to the bottom and I heard no more. I then rolled a stone weighing 300 or 400 pounds into the den, stepped back two or three steps and prepared myself for the outcome. The stone had scarcely reached the bottom when the bear came rushing out, with his mouth wide open, and was on the point of making a spring at me when I pulled trigger and shot him through the left shoulder, which sent him rolling down the mountain. It being near night, I butchered him and left the meat lying and returned to camp. The next day I took the meat to camp, where we salted and smoked it, ready for winter's use. We stopped about on these streams until the 15th of December, then returned to Fort Hall, where we staid until the 24th of March. The winter was unusually severe. The snow was 15 inches deep over the valley after settling and becoming hard. We had no thawing weather until the 18th of March, when it began to rain and continued four days and nights, which drove the snow nearly all from the plains.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Closing Incidents of an Interesting Experience—The Author Leaves the Mountains for Oregon.

March 25th—I started, in company with Alfred Shutes, my old comrade from Vermont, to go to the Salt lake and pass the spring hunting water fowl, eggs and beaver. We left the fort and traveled in a southerly direction to the mountain, about 30 miles. The next day we traveled south about 15 miles through a low defile and the day following we crossed the divide and fell on to a stream called "Malad" or Sick river, which empties into Bear river about 10 miles from the mouth. This stream takes its name from the beaver which inhabit it living on poison roots. Those who eat their meat become sick at the stomach in a few hours and the whole system is filled with cramps and severe pains, but I have never known or heard of a person dying with the disease. We arrived at the mouth of Bear river on the 2d of April. Here we found the ground dry, the grass green and myriads of swans, geese, brants and ducks, which kept up a continual hum day and night, assisted by the uncouth notes of the sand hill cranes. The geese, ducks and swans are very fat at this season of the year. We caught some few beaver and feasted on fowls and eggs until the 20th of May and returned to the fort, where we stopped until the 20th of June, when a small party arrived from the mouth of the Columbia river on their way to the United States and my comrade made up his mind once more to visit his native Green Mountains, after an absence of 16 years, while I determined on going to the mouth of the Columbia and settle myself in the Willamette or Multnomah valley. I accompanied my comrade up Ross Fork about 25 miles on his journey and the next morning after taking an affectionate leave of each other, I started to the mountains for the purpose of killing elk and drying meat for my journey to the Willamette valley. I ascended to the top of Ross mountain (on which the snows remain till the latter part of August), sat down under a pine and took a last farewell view of a country over which I had traveled so often under such a variety of circumstances. The recollections of the past connected with the scenery now spread out before me, put me somewhat in a poetical humor and for the first time I attempted to frame my thoughts into rhyme, but if poets will forgive me for this intrusion I shall be cautious about trespassing on their grounds in future.

In the evening I killed an elk and on the following day cured the meat for packing. From thence I returned to the fort, where I staid till the 22d of August.

In the meantime there arrived at the fort a party of emigrants from the States, on their way to the Oregon country, among whom was Dr. E. White, U. S. sub-agent for the Oregon Indians. 23d—I started with them and arrived at the falls of the Willamette river on the 26th day of September, 1842.

It would be natural for me to suppose that after escaping all the dangers attendant upon nearly nine years' residence in a wild, inhospitable region like the Rocky Mountains, where I was daily, and a great part of the time hourly, anticipating danger from hostile savages and other sources, I should, on arriving in a civilized and enlightened community live in comparative security, free from the harassing intrigues of Dame Fortune's eldest daughter, but I found it was all a delusion, for danger is not always the greatest when most apparent, as will appear in the sequel.

On arriving at the falls of the Willamette, I found a number of Methodist missionaries and American farmers had formed themselves into a company for the purpose of erecting mills and a sawmill was then building on an island standing on the brink of the falls, which went into operation about two months after I arrived. In the meantime Dr. John McLoughlin, a chief factor of the Hudson Bay Company, who contemplated leaving the service of the company and permanently settling with his family and fortune in the Willamette valley, laid off a town (the present Oregon City) on the east side of the falls and began erecting a sawmill on a site he had prepared some years previous by cutting a race through the rock to let the water on to his works when they should be constructed.

The following spring the American company commenced building a flour mill and I was employed to assist in its construction. On the 6th day of June I was engaged with the contractor in blasting some points of rock in order to sink the water sill to its proper place, when a blast exploded accidentally by the concussion of small particles of rock near the powder, a piece of rock weighing about 60 pounds struck me on the right side of the face and knocked me, senseless, six feet backwards.

I recovered my senses in a few minutes and was assisted to walk to my lodgings. Nine particles of rock of the size of wild goose shot each, had penetrated my right eye and destroyed it forever. The contractor escaped with the loss of two fingers of his left hand.



THE HUNTER'S FAREWELL.

Adieu, ye hoary, icy-mantled towers

That ofttimes pierce the onward fleeting mists,
Whose feet are washed by gentle summer showers,

While Phoebus' rays play on your sparkling crests;
The smooth, green vales you seem prepared to guard,
Beset with groves of ever verdant pine,
Would furnish themes for Albion's noble bards,
Far 'bove a hunter's rude, unvarnish'd rhyme.

Adieu, ye flocks that skirt the mountain's brow
And sport on banks of everlasting snow,

Ye timid lambs and simple, harmless ewes,
Who fearless view the dread abyss below;
Oft have I watched your seeming mad career
While lightly tripping o'er those dismal heights,
Or cliffs o'erhanging yawning caverns drear,
Where none else tread save fowls of airy flight.

Oft have I climbed those rough, stupendous rocks
In search of food 'mong Nature's well-fed herds,
Until I've gained the rugged mountain's top,
Where Boreas reigned or feathered monarchs soar'd;
On some rude crag projecting from the ground
I've sat a while, my wearied limbs to rest,
And scanned the unsuspecting flocks around
With anxious care, selecting out the best.

The prize obtained, with slow and heavy step
Pac'd down the steep and narrow winding path,
To some smooth vale where crystal streamlets met,
And skillful hands prepared a rich repast;
Then hunters' jokes and merry humor'd sport
Beguiled the time, enlivened every face,
The hours flew fast and seemed like moments, short,
'Til twinkling planets told of midnight's pace.

But now those scenes of cheerful mirth are done,
The antlered herds are dwindling very fast,
The numerous trails so deep by bisons worn,
Now teem with weeds or overgrown with grass;
A few gaunt wolves now scattered o'er the place
Where herds, since time unknown to man, have fed,
With lonely howls and sluggish, onward pace,
Tell their sad fate and where their bones are laid.

Ye rugged mounts, ye vales, ye streams and trees,
To you a hunter bids his last farewell,
I'm bound for shores of distant, western seas,
To view far-famed Multnomah's fertile vale;
I'll leave these regions, once-famed hunting grounds,
Which I, perhaps, again shall see no more,
And follow down, led by the setting sun
Or distant sound of proud Columbia's roar.

June 22, 1842.

—OSBORNE RUSSELL.



PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

This journal ends so abruptly, with no hint of the personal fortunes of this most interesting author (who, by the way, was a great uncle of the writer of these explanatory notes), that we have gathered such information as we were able from surviving relatives, and append it hereto.

Osborne Russell was born in Maine, June 12, 1814. He had very little schooling, and like most of the boys raised on the Kennebec river, dreamed of going to sea. Forbidden by his father to indulge this desire, at the age of sixteen he ran away from home and shipped on a sailing vessel. They had a hard skipper and the crew deserted the vessel when she touched New York. Here he joined the Northwest Fur Trapping & Trading Co., operating principally in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Two or three years in the employ of this company brings the author to the initial chapter of his "Journal," April, 1834. The Journal records his fortunes up till June 6, 1843.

From information gathered, it appears that Mr. Russell took a prominent part in political affairs, and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Provisional Government of Oregon. Family recollection has it that he was the defeated candidate for Governor of Oregon at the first election under Territorial organization, his defeat being due in part, at least, to his outspoken disapproval of the government's policy in western affairs—notably, refusing military protection to the settlers from the Indians, and at the same time attempting to recruit soldiers from that domain for the war in Mexico.

Hon. John Halley, pioneer of Oregon and Idaho, who has charge of the Idaho Historical Society exhibit in the Capitol building, has a copy of "Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer," written by Peter H. Burnett, the first governor of the State of California. Judge Burnett was prominent in the political history of Oregon 1843-8, and we find the following mention of Osborne Russell at pages 161-2 of his very interesting book, written about the year 1860:

"I have already mentioned the name of Judge O. Russell as one of the Rocky Mountain men. He is a native of the State of Maine, and came to the mountains when a young man, in pursuit of health. All his comrades agreed that he never lost his virtuous habits, but always remained true to

his principles. He was never married. He was at one time one of the *Executive Committee of our Provisional Government in Oregon, and most faithfully did he perform his duty. He is a man of education and of refined feelings. After the discovery of gold he came to the mines, and has been engaged in mining in El Dorado County, California, ever since. When in Oregon he was occasionally a guest at my house, and would for hours together entertain us with descriptions of mountain life and scenery. His descriptive powers were fine, and he would talk til a late hour at night. My whole family were deeply attentive, and my children yet remember the Judge with great pleasure. He was always a most welcome guest at my house. He did not tell so many extraordinary stories as the average Rocky Mountain trapper and hunter, but those he did tell were true."

Then followed a description of the encounter with a grizzly, practically as recorded on page seven of this book.

*We are informed by Hon. John Halley that under the Provisional Government of Oregon, the three members of the Executive Committee had practically the same powers and functions as the Governor would have, or in other words, instead of electing a Governor they elected three men to act in that capacity.—Ed.

In 1848 Mr. Russell left Oregon for Sacramento, California, and the gold fields. The following letter, which is in good state of preservation, explains conditions better than we could describe them, and we give it verbatim:

California (Gold Mines) Nov. 10, 1849.

Dear Sister:—You will not probably be astonished when you see my locality, at the date of this letter, as I think Malne, and even Hallowell, must by this time have had a touch of the gold fever.

I left Oregon last September for this country by land, and arrived here on the 25th of the same, and on the 20th of October was attacked with the billous fever, which lasted until winter. I remained in the mines during the winter and until now and shall also spend this winter in the mines.

Owing to my ill health last winter I engaged in merchandising; in March commenced collecting gold with my own hands and continued working until the first of October, when I commenced business under the firm of Russell & Gilliam—provision store and boarding house. My partner, an old neighbor from Oregon, having his family here. We are doing a thriving business for this country. About 30,000 people have come across land to this country this season. The old miners, I think, average from \$12 to \$16 per day, estimating gold at \$6 per ounce.

Cities and towns are arising up among the hills and mountains in the gold region as if by the effect of magic.

The place where we are located is called Gallowstown. It is situated 55 miles east of the city of Sacramento, on the south side, within four miles of the American river. It takes the name from the fact of our having hung three men for murder last winter. Your brother sat as one of the judges pro tempore on the trial. Since that dreadful execution, this has been one of the most quiet communities I ever lived in.

Some people here are getting gold by the pound per day, and others not making more than their board, and I am informed it is the same throughout the mines, which are nearly 400 miles in length—confined entirely to the hills, mountain streams and ravines. The most I have ever dug in a day was \$100, but have frequently obtained \$40 to \$60 per day.

The gold here in this place is coarse, from one-half dollar to six ounces in a piece, yet some is so fine that it can hardly be seen with the naked eye. But let this suffice for the gold diggings and let something else take its place.

I received a letter from Martha, dated September 24th, 1848, in which she informed me that she was to be married in December, and that is the only cause why she does not get an answer from me; not that I have the least wish to prevent her from uniting with the man of her choice, but I must hear of her being certainly married, and to whom before I shall know how to direct a letter to her, as this life is filled with uncertainties.

A gentleman from Thomaston, Maine, with whom I became acquainted this spring, stepping into the store today told me he should start for Maine on the 12th and should pass through Lewiston, as he had some relatives living there. I also having a dear relative living there, determined at once to send her a letter, although she has not answered my last.

I am in good health, good spirits and full of business at present, and it is now near 11 o'clock at night and I must yet write a few lines to Daniel before I sleep. When I shall see Maine I cannot tell, but expect to see it before long and fetch with me some of the California gold. But people value not gold here as they would in the United States. The slight of so much of it makes it familiar to them and depreciates its value. Silver coin seems like iron.

Give my best respects to Mr. Read and an uncle's love to your children, with compliments to all inquiring friends.

Send your letters to Sacramento City, California, by the first opportunity and believe me to be your most affectionate brother,

OSBORNE RUSSELL.

To his sister Eleanor.

The letter had no envelope, but was folded and sealed with wax as was customary at that date, and addressed on the back as follows:

MRS. ELEANOR READ,

Lewiston, Maine.

By the politeness of Mr. Kinney.

Mrs. Read was our grandmother. "Martha," to whom he refers, was a younger sister, and Daniel was his cousin. The latter, Hon. Daniel Russell of Massachusetts, died some years ago, leaving a considerable fortune to his elder son, with a provision that if the younger son (Daniel) returned home (he had run away in his youth) he was to have one-half of the estate. Two Daniels appeared on the scene at about the same time, each claiming to be the son, and the matter has been in the Massachusetts courts for a number of years, and so far as we know is not yet determined.

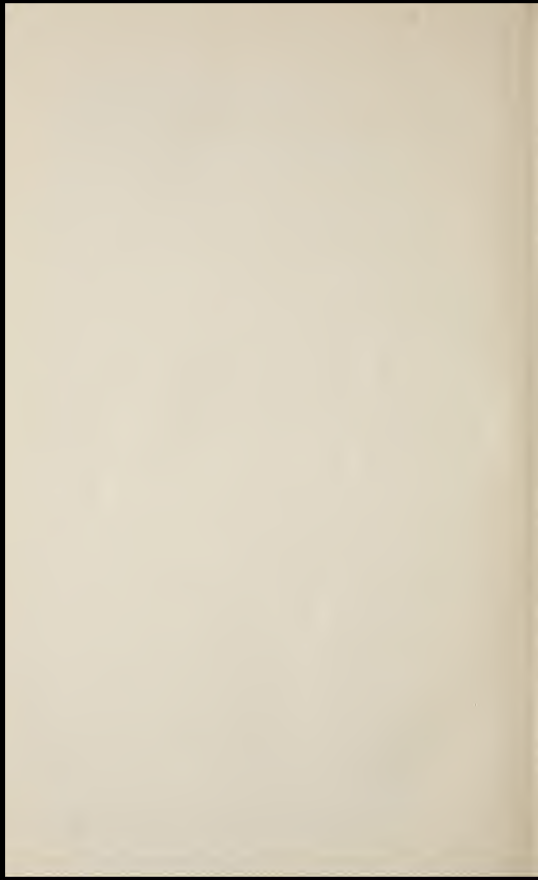
To continue. It seems that Osborne Russell prospered in his mining and merchandising, and that he and a partner later acquired two vessels which plied between Sacramento and Portland. During one of his trips to the mines, the partner absconded, after collecting all he could of the firm's money, taking one loaded boat to Oregon and also disposing of that. Mr. Russell spent the balance of his days trying to repay their creditors, finally being attacked by what was termed "Miner's Rheumatism," which paralyzed him from the waist down, and he spent the last year of his eventful life in the county hospital at Placerville, El Dorado County. We have been unable to get the date of his death, but have been informed that he was satisfied to die, and at peace with the world and his Maker.

In publishing this "Journal," we have been interested only in preserving to history an unvarnished story of early life in the west, with perhaps a little personal pride because of distant relationship with the author. The edition is limited

and will be distributed to the Historical Societies of Maine, Idaho, Oregon and California, and to relatives and personal friends. No copies are for sale.

L. A. YORK.

Boise, Idaho, August 1, 1914.



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